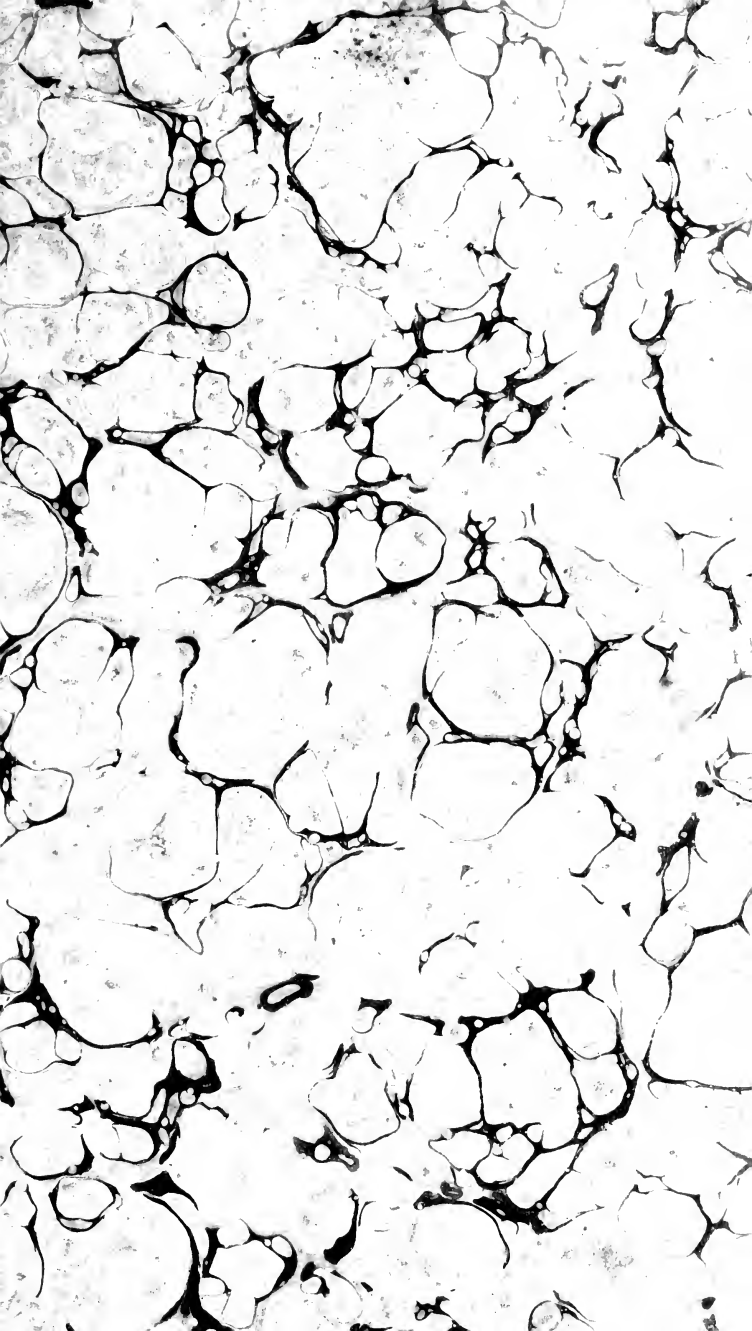


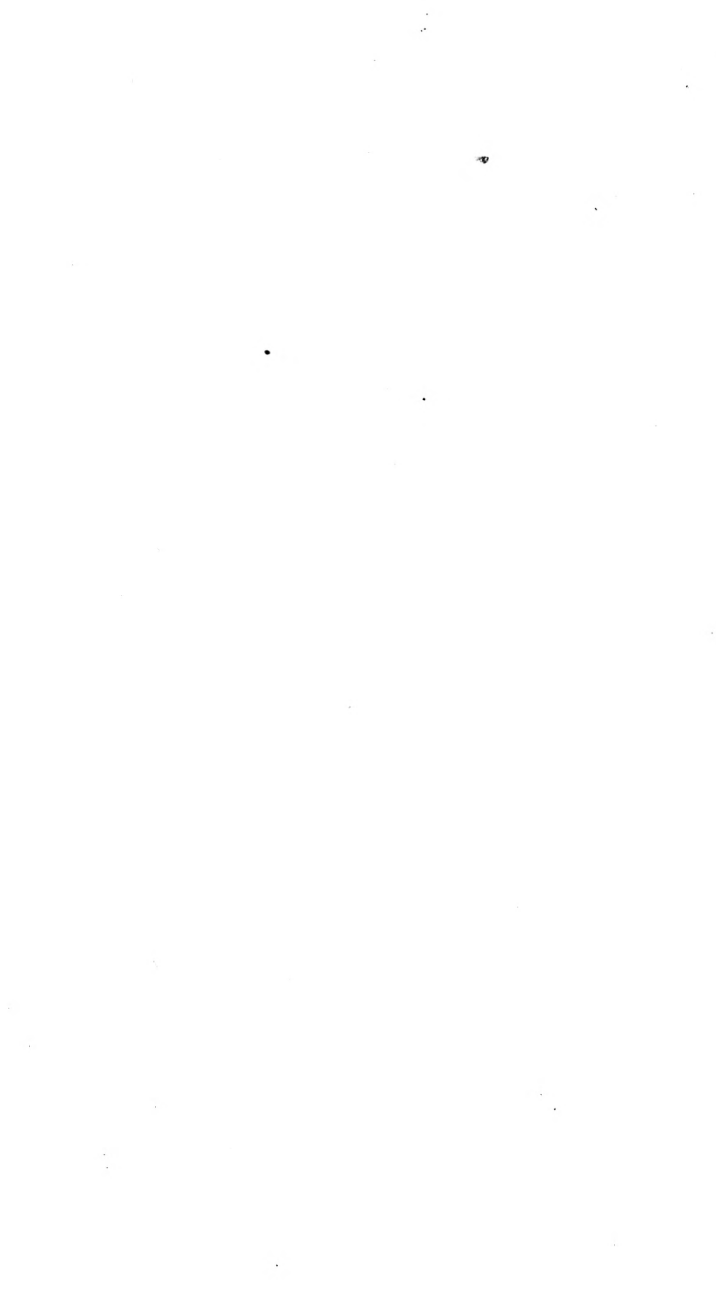




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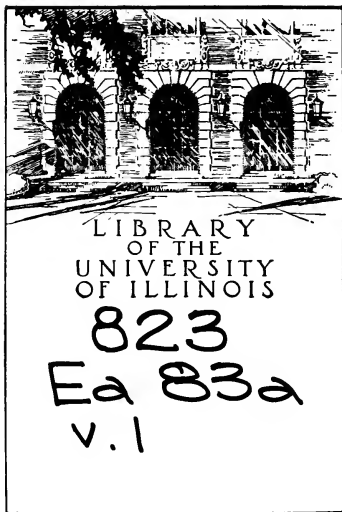
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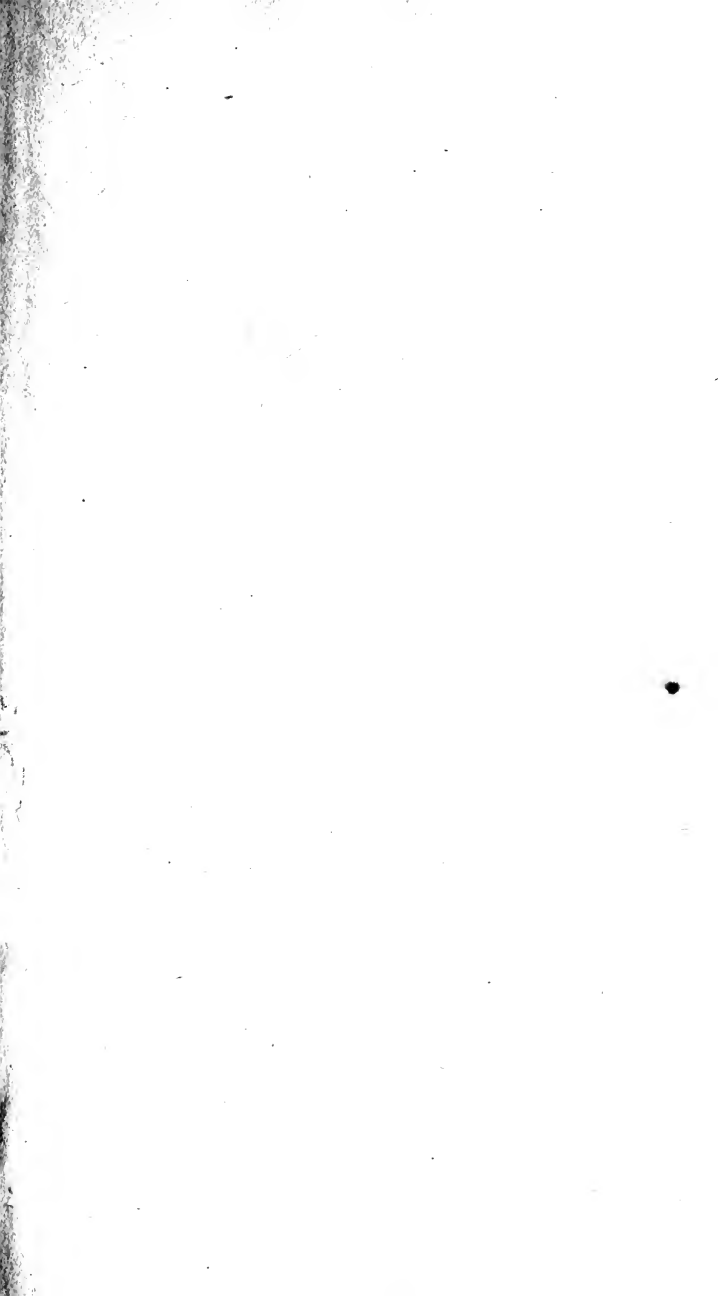




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AT HOME AND ABROAD;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

EMILY DE CARDONNELL.

VOL. I.

G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

AT HOME AND ABROAD;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

EMILY DE CARDONNELL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“ROME IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,”

“CONTINENTAL ADVENTURES,”

ETC.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Mrs Eaton
nee Chall Walshe

“The cordial drop of life is love alone.”

POPE.

LONDON :

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1831.

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v. 1

TO

MY HUSBAND,

MY BELOVED COMPANION, SUPPORTER, AND FRIEND

THROUGH LIFE'S PILGRIMAGE,

THIS VOLUME

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE WIFE,

THE AUTHOR.

Gen. no. Ray Aug's & Eaton = 3v.

PREFACE.

“UN AUTEUR,” says the Prince de Ligne, “*un Auteur est un pauvre diable qui fait face à dix mille hommes. Comment ne seroit-il pas battu? Il ne peut pas même se défendre; il ne voit pas ceux qui l’attaquent.*” He stands forth helpless, like an unhappy wretch in the pillory to be pelted by all the missiles of popular assault or wanton malice, without even the power to shrink from the merciless shower,—far less to throw in return a single stone. He is a mark set up to be shot at, and although transfixed on all sides with the arrows of criticism, yet vainly will he essay to draw out one barbed shaft.

The Critics indeed think of him only as a subject to make sport for their readers, for whose amusement they torture him; and they review his book—not to give an impartial account of it,—but to write a clever article at his expense. They have no more mercy upon a poor author, than a sportsman has upon the frightened hare he starts; and vain alike would be the petition to spare either victim.

How unnecessary was Boileau's warning !

“ Craignez tout d'un auteur en courroux ” ;

for the poor author's impotent rage may exhale to the unmindful winds ; the world will only laugh at it. The critics, at once his accusers and judges, bring their charges against him before the tribunal of the public, but he is never heard in his own defence.

Praise, indeed, may be cheaply bought, daily or hebdomadally, by those authors and publishers who are not too proud to pay for it by the line, and to advertise the superlative excellence of their own works ; as the long columns filled with flaming paragraph-advertisements in the newspapers, *ad captandum vulgus*, testify. Indeed, Hunt's Matchless Blacking has scarcely been puffed with more persevering ingenuity and success than the race of fashionable novels.

But this is an UNFASHIONABLE NOVEL : therefore its characters must be Goths and Vandals,—its manners those of a barbarous age, and its views, ideas, and modes of thinking utterly exploded, since they existed in a period of such remote antiquity,—no less than five and twenty years ago !

It is now indeed eighteen years since this Novel was composed : in that happy period of early youth

“ When nature pleas'd, for life itself was new,

And the heart promis'd what the fancy drew ;”

when the world shone in the bright colouring of hope and joy, when “ life seemed one long banquet,” and

its opening prospects presented no view but happiness.

Gay illusions of youth ! how soon are ye fled ! and how blank and dark, seem the dull, cold realities of life, when sorrow, and disappointment, and death have riven the frail reeds on which we leaned for earthly happiness ! Soon, too soon,

“ The gay romance of life is done,
The real history is begun.”

But to return to the subject from which I have insensibly wandered,—that of this juvenile composition. The Critics will doubtless tell me that it is easy to perceive it was written before the Author had arrived at years of discretion,—which actually was the case. But it is not with any view to deprecate censure, or extenuate defects, that this statement is made ; it is simply in order to explain, that when I was still engaged in writing this Novel, and when it was nearly completed, Miss Edgeworth’s admirable work “ Patronage ” first appeared ; and I found, or fancied, to my great dismay, that a remarkable coincidence in many trifling points existed between the two works, widely as they differed in plan, character, design, tendency, and above all in talent and merit. Impressed with the highest admiration for Miss Edgeworth’s pre-eminent abilities and inimitable writings, I felt myself peculiarly unfortunate in being thus dragged into a comparison with a work so immeasurably superior to my own ; and still more in being subjected

to the degrading suspicion of having servilely adopted her ideas. To exonerate myself from the latter most unmerited imputation, no sooner had I read "Patronage," which was almost immediately after its first publication, than I addressed to the Editor of the Monthly Magazine (at that period in widely extensive circulation) a letter stating the numerous points of resemblance, which had struck me, between "Patronage" and my manuscript novel. A part of this letter, which was published in the Monthly Magazine, Vol. II. for the year 1814, page 423, I must beg leave to insert here, as, like most periodicals, that once celebrated work has fallen into oblivion *.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

"SIR,

"Will you allow me to engross a corner of your valuable Magazine with a statement, which, though wholly uninteresting to others, is highly important to myself.

"I yesterday finished the perusal of Miss Edgeworth's 'Patronage', and I find, with equal surprise and concern, that there is a most singular and striking resemblance between some parts of that work and of one which I have lately written—not in their general tendency—not in their plan—and, assuredly not in

* The Monthly Magazine, which was published by Sir R. Phillips, St. Paul's Churchyard, was discontinued before the commencement of the present New Monthly Magazine.

their excellence ; but in the story, the characters, and some of the incidents.

“ With your leave I shall simply state some of the most remarkable of these. The name of the heroine of my tale is Caroline* ; and in talents—in mental acquirements—in strength of mind—in conduct—and in almost every thing except in prudence—she resembles Miss Edgeworth’s Caroline. The hero of the tale is also a foreign count—a Danish, instead of a German nobleman ;—his father is likewise the prime minister and the favourite of his prince, and he is strongly urged by them to marry a lady of high rank at the Danish court—but his attachment to Caroline renders him firm in refusing the alliance. He, too, has an artful enemy. There is also a Frenchified Englishman in my work, who does not however bear any very striking resemblance to “ French Clay” ; and there is also a young woman who has been betrayed and abandoned, and who lives in a cottage near to the heroine ; but her story and fate differ considerably from those of Kate Robinson.

* * * * *

“ Nothing but the necessity of vindicating my literary and even my moral character, (for he who steals ideas, would steal treasure also,) could render the egotism of this letter excusable in the eyes of others, or in my own. Let me not be suspected of the un-

* This name has since been altered to Emily.

Note by the Author, February, 1831.

pardonable presumption of wishing to compare myself to a writer of such distinguished talents and pre-eminent usefulness as Miss Edgeworth, to whom belongs the exclusive praise of having been the first to shew how much philosophical truth and practical morality, may be conveyed in the most amusing works of fiction.

“ C.” *

“ March 2, 1814.”

Note, by the Editor of the Monthly Magazine.

* “ We regret that we were unable to give earlier insertion to this letter, and that even now we are obliged to limit the extent of the writer’s explanations.”

These accidental and certainly unimportant coincidences threw a damp upon the prosecution of this work which I had previously been composing with all the ardour and delight of a young author, and I left it uncompleted, fearing, notwithstanding my above published disavowal, that I might still be suspected as a plagiarist;—that

“ — Wretch accursed

Who pilfers *other’s thoughts*, and makes them worse,

Like gipsies, lest the stolen brat be known,

Defacing first, then claiming for their own.” *

I was also soon afterwards thrown amidst the busy and spirit-stirring events of active life; and during several

* Churchill.

succeeding years, spent in foreign countries and classic scenes, objects of higher interest wholly engaged my mind.

Lord Orford observes that "most men now write as if they expected that their works should live no more than a month," and hurry through the press as if they thought that the end of the world, as well as of "the season" was at hand. Certainly I cannot be accused of precipitation in rushing before the public, having kept my work double the period prescribed by Horace ; so that

"If time improves our wit as well as wine,
My novel, surely, should have grown divine ;"

But unluckily, some

"Authors, like coins, grow *dull* as they grow old ;
Their wit gets rusty, unless sterling gold ;"

and it is not probable that mine has improved in brilliancy more than my manuscript, which remained, during seventeen long years, locked up in a box.

The question however, probably will be, not why its appearance has been so long delayed, but why it appears at all? Why I have now dragged forth this juvenile composition from the obscurity to which I had so long, and so wisely consigned it, and at last finished and published it? I can only reply that I began it for my amusement, and I have ended it for my amusement ; and if any of my readers should derive one-twentieth part of the entertainment from

reading it, that I have done from writing it, they will find the trouble of perusal amply repaid. I have not the presumption to expect that it should enjoy more than the usual ephemeral existence of a modern novel; but if during its brief span of life, it should, like hundreds of its predecessors, serve to beguile the hours of sickness, and sorrow, and solitude, or prove a momentary mental anodyne to the cares of life, the ambition of its Author will be amply satisfied.

That this was not my motive for publishing it, however, I must candidly own: but,—I scarcely know whether I may venture to acknowledge the whole truth,—these scenes and characters, the creation of my youthful fancy, and endeared to my remembrance by a thousand associations, are so vividly identified as real in my mind, that I can scarcely convince myself that they are purely ideal. To me, they seem no imaginary beings—no fictitious personifications of romance—but the friends whom I have long and intimately known, and the scenes and events among which I have lived and moved. Therefore do I feel the longing desire, so far as it is in my power, to rescue them from oblivion, and give them

“ a local habitation and a name.”

It was of course impossible to alter or improve a work nearly completed, in plan, character, incident, or any essential point; but deeply conscious of the respect due to the Public, I have most carefully revised and

corrected the whole of it, omitting a great many passages, and occasionally adding others.—In short, as Mr. Perry says of his pens and ink, I have “*perfectionated it*” to the utmost of my power.

But the province of the novelist, is to interest and amuse, and it concerns the public only to know how far he has succeeded in his aim, not, what time and labour he has bestowed upon it.

“ With care and thought the Author wrote these scenes,
 But if they’re bad, ne’er spare him for his pains :
 Hoot him the more ; *have no commiseration*
For dullness on mature deliberation.
 To entertain has been his sole pretence,
 He can’t instruct, nor would he give offence.
 Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect,
 For, so reformed an age, who dare correct ?
 Should he by chance a knave or fool expose,
 That hurts none here—sure here are none of those !” *

“ Here then will we begin the story ; only adding thus much to that which hath been said, that it is a foolish thing to make a long prologue.” †

* Congreve.

† Maccabees, Book II. ch. ii. ver. 32.

VOL. I.

THE Reader is requested to correct the following

ERRATA.

Page 34, line 12, *for* "with" *read* "of".

— 115, line 17, *for* "hurried" *read* "handed".

— 139, line 8, *for* "Akenside" *read* "Mallet".

— 173, line 2, *for* "who accompanied" *read* "who had accompanied".

— 202, line 2 from the bottom, *for* "his" *read* "Count Waldemar's".

— 213, line 3 from the bottom, *for* "repress his" *read* "repress the expression of his".

— 213, last line, *for* "distress." *read* "distress; and whose insolence he intreated her to disregard."

— 345, line 5, *for* "deserting" *read* "desertion".

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

A VICTORY AND AN ADVENTURE.

“ O life ! how pleasant in thy morning,
Young Fancy’s rays the hills adorning !
Cold, pausing Caution’s lesson scorning,
We frisk away ;
Like schoolboys, at the expected warning
To joy and play.”

BURNS.

“ O Gioventu !
O Primavera ! gioventu dell’ anno,
O Gioventu ! primavera della vita ! ”

“ THE letters and papers from the post, ma’am,” said the butler, as he laid them on the library table, perceiving that Miss De Cardonnell was so intently engaged in reading as not to observe them. Throwing down her book, she hastily examined the directions of the letters ; but there was no foreign post mark ; and, much disappointed, she began mechanically to unfold the newspaper, when her eye was caught by the words “ EXTRAORDINARY GAZETTE ! ” — The news of a bat-

tle and a victory ! With a palpitating heart she turned to the list of the killed and wounded ; and at one glance her quick eye took in the names. But *his* she trembled to see was not there ; and clasping her hands, while joy and gratitude illumined every feature of her expressive countenance, in a voice almost inaudible with emotion, she exclaimed, “ Thank God ! he is safe ! ” at the moment Mrs. De Cardonnell entered the room. “ O mamma, he is safe ! ” she repeated ; “ There has been a battle,—they have gained a glorious victory,—and he is safe ! ”

She threw herself into her mother’s arms, and a shower of tears relieved her throbbing heart ; while with glistening eyes, and with a deep-drawn sigh of thankfulness, her mother exclaimed, “ God be praised ! ”

It was the safety of a husband and father which caused this strong emotion : strange, that the extremes of joy and grief should express themselves by the same external signs !

The newspapers contained despatches from Sir John Stuart, announcing the battle of Maida, that memorable field, where, after a long interval, the British first encountered by land their ancient foes, and showed that superiority in valour and in arms, which they afterwards uninterruptedly maintained, during the long years of sanguinary contest and unparalleled triumph, on the desolated plains of Spain, France, and Flanders.

Until now, although England had been confessedly invincible by sea, it was supposed that she was in-

ferior to the French by land; a prejudice, if not caused, at least confirmed, by the British ministry, who persisted in subsidizing foreign nations, at an enormous expense, to carry on the war, as if our own troops were unable to cope with the French, or to fight the battles of their country. Not all the memory of England's ancient fame in the fields of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, nor the proud series of the victories of Marlborough, nor even the recent and glorious campaign of Egypt, could inspire the British government with sufficient confidence in their own army, to employ it in active continental service. Consequently the nation, and even the army themselves, were not aware of their pre-eminence in arms.

But the trial had now at length been made; and at Maida five thousand British completely defeated twice the number of French*.

This victory, which first raised the fame of the British arms, although its remembrance has since been almost effaced by more recent and brilliant triumphs, was then hailed with universal enthusiasm by the whole nation.

General De Cardonnell, who had held an important

* According to the computation of the best informed among the British officers, the French forces must have amounted to nearly 11,000 men; because General Regnier was joined the night before the engagement by 3000 troops who were not estimated in the French statement of their force. But even by their own shewing, they had, including the cavalry, about 8000 efficient men; and the total number of the British force was under 5000 men.

command, had been stationed in the post of honour and danger, and upon his judgment and conduct the commander-in-chief bestowed the highest praise. A stratagem, which he had successfully employed, had thrown the French into irretrievable panic. Their position was peculiarly strong, being flanked by woods which they considered impenetrable ; but at a critical moment of the battle, General De Cardonnell brought up a small body of reserve, recently landed, which had been placed at his disposal, and forming them under cover of the wood, he unexpectedly debouched upon the flank of the enemy, while, at the same moment, he caused another small party of them to advance from behind a rising ground, so as to conceal their real smallness of numbers ; and as they came on in the most imposing style, with colours flying, accompanied with a tremendous clang of drums, trumpets, and every description of martial sound, not only from the handful of troops themselves, but from the baggage-men and boys in the rear, and even from the women and other followers of the camp, who joined most lustily in the uproar ; the French, appalled by the unexpected appearance of what they supposed to be another army advancing in two divisions upon their flank and rear,—deluded by the purposely spread outcry, that fresh reinforcements of British troops had just landed,—and expecting to be surrounded on three sides at once,—gave way in confusion before an impetuous charge with the bayonet, led on by General De Car-

donnell at the head of his division, and followed up by the whole British army. Thus was the victory achieved; —the French army were totally routed, and fled panic-struck from the field. So dreadful was the carnage in the pursuit, that the Amato, a shallow mountain stream near which the battle was fought, ran red with their blood. Horrible to relate, some of the high ripe standing corn in the valley of St. Euphemia took fire, whether by accident or design was never known, and numbers of the unfortunate wounded French soldiers, and, it is feared, some of the English also, perished miserably in the flames.

The reapers, who were busy with the labours of harvest when the battle began, throwing down their sickles, stood by and gazed on the bloody contest, cheering on the English as they advanced to every fresh charge.

The eager delight with which Emily flew to impart the great and joyful news of the victory, and of her father's safety and glory, to the old domestics—the speed with which she herself hastened down to Nurse Martha's cottage, to communicate it to the kind and faithful creature who had reared her in infancy, and by whom it was quickly spread through the village, and through every hamlet and farm-house—the exclamations, and rejoicings, and speculations—the perusal and re-perusal of the Gazette—the comments and conjectures to which it gave rise, and, above all, the anticipation of the expected letters from General De

Cardonnell himself by the next post,—may be better imagined than described.

Emily De Cardonnell was at this period one of the loveliest and happiest of human beings. Nature had endowed her with uncommon powers of mind, and what is infinitely more rare and valuable, with a heart overflowing with the warmest affections and noblest feelings of our nature. Her taste led her to find unfailing delight in the pure and simple pursuits and pleasures of home. Knowledge, literature, and the arts, yielded to her cultivated mind their inexhaustible charms. Her happy temper found in every trifling domestic occurrence a source of enjoyment. Her enthusiasm served to heighten her admiration for all that is great and good; and even her acute natural sensibility, which is so often the source of misery to the possessor, was conducive to her happiness, for it was directed, not fruitlessly to lament over, but actively to relieve the sufferings of those around her.

But what she was, may, perhaps, more clearly appear from the subsequent narrative. Who she was it may be necessary to inform the reader.

Emily De Cardonnell, now twenty years of age, was the only surviving daughter of General De Cardonnell, whose ancestors traced their descent in unblemished and uninterrupted succession, back to Sir Rhodolph De Cardonnell, a bold Norman, who came over with William the Conqueror.

He seemed to have inherited, from this doughty

knight, his prowess in arms. Enthusiastically attached to the military profession, he had fought and gathered laurels in every clime. His life had been passed in active service, in foreign countries, in courts and camps ; and thus his visits to his noble seat upon the Lake of Coniston, in Lancashire, where his wife and daughter were now residing, had been short and infrequent. His estates were extensive and unincumbered ; his income large ; he was nearly allied, both by descent and marriage, to some of the most ancient and honourable families of English nobility. He was a distinguished favourite with ministers, and even with royalty itself ; consequently he was a person of great importance in the eyes of men. He was also a man of talent and taste, of highly cultivated mind and delightful manners,—open, generous, ardent, and sincere ; one of the best of friends and most entertaining of companions ; the delight of society, and the idol of his family.

He had only one son, Charles, a boy of fourteen, at Eton school ; and one daughter, whom we have already introduced to our readers.

The next day's post brought the eagerly expected letter from General De Cardonnell. Besides full details of the battle, and many interesting particulars which the despatches did not contain, he announced the happy news of the probability of his speedy return to England, and consequently he requested that his wife and daughter, who had been preparing to

follow him to Sicily, would relinquish their intention. They had been prevented from accompanying him, at the time he had been first sent out to Malta, by Mrs. De Cardonnell's severe illness, from the effects of which indeed she had yet scarcely fully recovered.

For three successive days after the arrival of this glorious news, the rain descended without cessation upon the hills of Coniston, and of course confined Emily to the house. But on the morning of the fourth, the sun shone out unclouded in the bright blue sky, and Emily mounted her horse to pay a morning visit to the family of Mr. Wentworth, Mrs. De Cardonnell's brother, who lived at Esthwaite Court, about seven miles distant from them, on the Lake of Windermere. Gaily bidding Mrs. De Cardonnell "good morning," she cantered from the door, with all that exhilaration of spirits which the air, the motion, and the scene, were calculated to excite.

It was a beautiful morning in September; the rich hues of autumn had already begun to tinge the woody banks which rose above the Lake of Coniston. Neat white cottages, half concealed among the trees, were scattered along its margin, and the sunny banks sloping to the water's edge, and interspersed with hanging wood, which formed its sides, presented a picturesque contrast to the wild and rugged rocks which were grouped in irregular masses at the head of the lake. Behind them, mountains piled on mountains, rose in frowning majesty, and seemed to shut it out from the

world. The light fleecy clouds rested on their dark sides, illumined by the morning sun-beams ; the fresh western breeze curling the bright bosom of the lake, bore health and spirit on its wing ; and Emily, as she rode along, gazed upon this lovely scene with those delightful sensations which make the very consciousness of existence itself happiness,—those sensations which gladden the morning of life, but seldom cheer its meridian or animate its close.

She had already left the Lake of Coniston behind her, and had nearly passed the shores of Esthwaite water, when a double barrellled gun suddenly went off, almost close to her, on the other side of a high and thick hedge, which bounded the road to the right.

Her horse started at the loud report with a violence which would have thrown a less able rider, and furiously setting off at full gallop, was followed by the terrified groom, who, like “ panting Time, toiled after her in vain ;” for the faster he pursued, the faster galloped her affrighted horse, and Emily found herself utterly unable to controul its furious speed. Her danger was imminent, for straight before her lay the long and precipitous descent which led to Windermere Lake, and down which she must have been dashed headlong, had she not, when almost upon its very brink, had the presence of mind and address, to direct her horse’s impetuous course up a narrow country road which turned off to the left, and led up the side of a long steep hill. In ascending this, the animal, ex-

hausted by its own violent exertions, was compelled to slacken its pace, so that she soon succeeded in stopping and turning it back : and she slowly returned to the road she had quitted.

Before she had reached it, she was met by two gentlemen in shooting dresses, who, conscious of being the cause of the accident, had followed her as fast as they could run. One of them she recognized to be her cousin, Percival Wentworth. Panting for breath, he could only exclaim, as he seized her horse's bridle, " My dear Emily !—I am so sorry ! I am afraid you are hurt—and sadly frightened."

" Not the least hurt—and not much frightened," said Emily, with a smile.

" Thank Heaven !" exclaimed the other gentleman.

" Ah Count !—it was all your fault ! It was you that fired, not I. A pretty cavalier you are, to behave so cavalierly ! Why don't you humble yourself in the dust—or rather in the dirt, for there is no dust—to implore Miss De Cardonnell's forgiveness ?—Miss De Cardonnell allow me to present to you Count Conrad Henry Ernest Waldemar, a gentleman who is introduced to you under peculiarly favourable auspices, having just been the means of nearly breaking your neck, and of frightening you entirely out of your wits ;—that is——if——"

" If I had any wits to be frightened out of, perhaps you mean," said Emily, laughing.

“ No, traitress !” he exclaimed. “ I mean if you had been like any other being of mortal mould. But you look as composed as if nothing had happened, when many other ladies would be falling into hysterics—panting, trembling, fainting, and dying away !—So inconvenient too, those faintings here—where there is neither salts nor sal volatile, nor any earthly thing better than ditch water to be had. We must have bedewed you with some of that dirty puddle, Emily, if you had fainted.”

“ You are very obliging,” said Emily, laughing.

“ But I cannot imagine how you contrived to keep your seat,” he ran on, “ though you always were a famous horsewoman.”

“ I gave no great proof of it, in suffering myself to be run away with this morning,” she said.

“ But that was not your fault,—nor mine,” said her cousin. “ It was the Count there, whose pardon I humbly solicit at your *hands*,—since he does not throw himself at your *feet* to ask it. Why, Count ! you look as if you were going to sink *into* the earth, not *on* to it. Why don’t you ask Miss De Cardonnell’s pardon ?”

“ Because I can have no hope of obtaining it,” he said. “ I have no excuse to offer ; and I have not sufficient assurance to ask forgiveness, when I am conscious I do not deserve it—and when I cannot forgive myself.”

“ Oh ! but Emily has such a pitying and forgiving

spirit, she will forgive you," answered Percival. "Won't you Emily?"

"I would, if I had any thing to forgive—but I have nothing. The hedge was so thick and high it was impossible to see me."

"But," said Count Waldemar, "we heard a horse——"

"And thought it was some old butter woman riding to Hawkeshead market," interrupted Percival mischievously.

Emily laughed.

"However we did not see you," he continued, "or perhaps we might *not* have taken you for an old butter woman."

By this time they had returned to the road, and were standing on the giddy brink where she had turned her horse's head up the lane. Count Waldemar shuddered as he looked down the long and steep descent to the lake. "Had you gone forward here," he said, "you must have been dashed to pieces."

"Think no more of it!" said Emily. "It was only an extra gallop. Besides, 'Sir John' was the culprit," said Emily, patting the arching neck of her proud steed. "A soldier's horse, and afraid to stand fire! He ought to be ashamed of himself for running away—especially with a soldier's daughter!"

"Sir John!" repeated Percival. "Upon my word!—Sir John Delamere! So you call your favourite horse after that gallant young Captain, Emily?"

“ I did not call him Sir John : my father did ; because Sir John Delamere had bred him, and trained him, and taken the utmost pains to make him a complete lady’s horse, on purpose to oblige papa.”

“ Hum !—To oblige papa ?”

“ Yes.—Is he not a handsome creature ?”

“ Who ? Sir John Delamere ? Very.”

“ No, no !” said Emily, laughing. “ Sir John, the horse.”

“ Beautiful,—and so is the man. Is he not Emily ?”

“ Yes ; he is handsome, certainly : but that is the least of his perfections.”

“ So then he is as great a favourite with you as ever ?”

“ Percival !” said Emily, gravely, “ Do you think that the man who saved my father’s life, can ever cease to be a great favourite, as you call it,—or rather a most highly valued friend ?”

“ He would not thank you for your *friendship* only however, I’ll engage,” muttered Percival to himself, loud enough to be heard.

“ Well, perhaps it is not friendship,” said Emily, “ but gratitude that we feel. Never shall I forget the obligations we owe him.”

“ But he was his aid-de-camp. It was a part of his duty to save his general’s life. I see no great merit in that.”

“ No !—Not when he voluntarily exposed his own

to the most imminent peril? When he quitted his post—disobeyed his orders—plunged into the thickest of the fight, and got severely wounded himself in that daring rescue?”

“Pooh!—All stuff! He just got enough to act the interesting when he came home to England, limping about upon that conceited crutch-stick, with one arm in a sling.”

“But he could not help limping,” said Emily, laughing. “My father says he has been slightly wounded again at Maida in the beginning of the action; but that he had his wound tied up, and fought to the last, and got another slight wound.”

“I dare say!—He’s always in luck.”

“In luck!—Out of luck you mean, surely?”

“No I don’t.—I mean that he is the luckiest fellow alive—always to get into the thickest of every thing, and always to get wounded. I would give a thousand pounds to be wounded.”

“O Percival!” exclaimed Emily, laughing incredulously.

“It is true,” said Percival, seriously. “And who would not? Who does not wish to have been wounded in battle?”

Count Waldemar laughed, and declared that for one, he had not the smallest wish to be wounded.

The keeper, who had been despatched to bring up their shooting ponies, now overtook them; and the gentlemen being immovably determined to escort Emily

safely to Esthwaite Court, they mounted and rode on at a brisk pace.

"Take care Sir John does not run away with you, Emily," said Percival slyly.

"O ! he never will do so again, I am sure," said Emily.

"So am not I," said Percival, significantly. "I think Sir John will run away with you if he can.—Depend upon it he will."

Emily seemed not to hear, for she turned her head and addressed some question to Count Waldemar.

Still, however, Percival persevered, earnestly recommending her to cashier Sir John. "Sir John the horse I mean," he added.

"My horse !" exclaimed Emily with a playful smile and a mock heroic air ;—"My horse ! I would not change my horse for any that treads upon four pasterns. He is my idol, my delight, my pride ! When I mount him I am no longer like a thing of earth—I seem to soar through the air. He is the prince of palfreys. His neigh is like the bidding of a monarch, and his very look enforces homage. The man hath no wit that cannot, from the rising of the lark to the lodging of the lamb, vary deserved praise upon my palfrey."

"Well done Emily ! Where did you pick up that flaming flight upon your steed !"

"It is the Dauphin's description of his charger, in King Henry the Fifth, or at least something like some of it—for it is very long."

“You bring Shakspeare to describe your horse—O that I could invoke him to describe his fair rider!—Let me see!—What is it? ‘See how she sits!—As if some god—no, goddess—had descended from the spheres, to witch the world with noble horsemanship.’ What is it Count? You who remember all the poetry that ever was written.”

“The best and simplest description that I remember at this moment of good horsemanship,” said Count Waldemar, “is recalled to my recollection by what I now see before me :

“The rider on his back sits still,
And looks where’er she lists, and sways him at her will.”

They had now reached Esthwaite Court, and hearing that Mrs. Wentworth and the young ladies were out in the pleasure grounds, they went in search of them, and found them on the borders of the lake, preparing to take a sail.

After Emily’s adventure had been related, and the news of the battle fully talked over, Emily obtained consent for her cousin Elizabeth to return with her to stay a few days at Coniston Hall ; but as the day was very hot, Mrs. Wentworth wished them to wait till evening, and go back in a carriage, but both Emily and Elizabeth much preferred riding ; and the former, knowing her mother would expect her to dinner, declined staying.

Count Waldemar, on hearing this, declared his resolution to escort the ladies back.

“ I ’ll go too, if you ’ll wait till evening,” said Percival. “ I should like the ride of all things. But surely you will not be so barbarous as to go home now, and so spoil our sport this beautiful day—the first shooting we have had? Besides the Count will break his heart if he can’t go out again.”

“ But if it is to be so very heart-breaking a business, why should either of you go with us ?” said Elizabeth, laughing.

“ O yes !—We will ride over with you. So don’t be obdurate, dear Emily, but stay dinner, and let us go now and shoot. Consider, spoiling our sport may be ‘ sport to you, but it ’s death to us.’ ”

“ And life to the partridges !—But I would not for the world be so inhuman as to spoil your sport.”

“ Then you ’ll stay !—That ’s a dear, good girl !”

It was now settled that Miss De Cardonnell’s groom should be despatched back to Coniston Hall to say she had agreed to stay dinner, with a strict charge not to mention the misadventure of her horse’s running away; and as there was fine moonlight, the party were to ride over in the evening.

“ Come Count !” said Percival, pulling out his watch, “ we have three hours good yet. Let ’s be off !”

“ I have made such bad use of my gun already to-day, that I ought to forswear it,” said Count Waldemar. “ Suppose, Wentworth, if the ladies are going to sail, that we offer ourselves as their boatmen ?”

“ Sail !” exclaimed Percival.—“ Behold the incon-

sistency of men—especially of this man ! After rousing me out of bed before seven this morning to have a long day's shooting, now he wants to sail !”

“ O !” exclaimed Louisa Wentworth, “ Count Waldemar seems easily charmed with any thing *new*,” darting a somewhat unamiable glance at Emily. She spoke in a tone of pique, for, a few minutes before she had put down a little snarling lap-dog which she had been carrying on her arm, and which had run yelping away; and she was angry that Count Waldemar, who, in truth, had neither observed her motions nor those of her dog, had not assisted her in the chase after it.—“ But, I suppose,” she continued, pushing back her bonnet from her beautiful glowing face,—“ I suppose the heat makes Count Waldemar indisposed to exert himself.”

Count Waldemar bowed, and smiled. A very peculiar expression lurked in his eye and on his lip.

“ We shan't sail,” said Mrs. Wentworth, hastily: “ it is really too warm to-day for sailing.”

The gentlemen then went away to resume their sport.

Emily, whose curiosity was strongly excited respecting Count Waldemar, immediately asked who he was.

“ He is a Dane, the only son of one of the first noblemen of Denmark.”

“ A Dane ! Is it possible ? Can he be a foreigner ?” said Emily. “ He speaks English quite like a native, and he looks so English ! The title of

Count puzzled me, or else I never should have doubted his being an Englishman."

"Certainly, he has quite the air and manners of an Englishman," said Mrs. Wentworth; "but he came to this country when a mere boy with his father, who was for many years ambassador from Denmark. At last, however, something the old Count either did, or did not do, displeased the Danish Court, and he was deprived of his appointment; but he left his son here at school, under the guardianship of his particular friend, Lord Harleston. His father, however, has long been at Copenhagen, high in office, and in favour with the prince royal of Denmark. Indeed, virtually, I believe, though not nominally, he is now at the head of affairs."

"And Count Waldemar, has he also been in Denmark?" asked Emily.

"Count Conrad Waldemar? This young man has been for some years making the tour of Europe, and of the east; and he has lately come back from the continent to see his old friends in England. Percival, although some years his junior, found him a most valuable friend both at school and at college."

"And Percival says, he carried off all the honours at the university," said Elizabeth.

"But that is several years ago," exclaimed Louisa. "He has been on the continent ever since."

"And has had time enough, you think, to forget all he had learnt at college?" said Emily, smiling. "Well, that is very possible."

“ No, no ! I mean only, that he has been every where so fêted, and followed, and admired ! In Paris he was quite the rage—all the ladies were dying for him ; and in London he was so run after, that I wonder his head was not turned.”

“ Perhaps it was,” said Emily.

“ Oh no,—he is not at all conceited. Don’t you think him very handsome ?”

“ Very,” said Emily. “ I never saw a finer countenance.”

“ And what a noble figure !” exclaimed Louisa.

“ And he is so accomplished !”

“ He is very clever, and has excellent taste,” said Elizabeth ; “ and he writes such witty things, Emily, and such beautiful verses !”

“ Why, Elizabeth, this is a *beau ideal* of a man,” said Emily, laughing.

“ Beau ideal !—he is a *beau real*, at least,” said Louisa, smiling at her own wit.

“ But you are making him into a monster of perfection—a phoenix of a man ! Now, I hate phoenixes, and all sorts and descriptions of monsters,” said Emily. “ Do tell me some of his faults, and no more of his perfections.”

“ Faults,” said Mrs. Wentworth, “ I dare say he has in abundance, only we have not had time or penetration yet to discover them. He certainly is one of the most pleasing and fascinating young men,—but there is a carriage at the door, I declare,” continued

Mrs. Wentworth, abruptly interrupting herself as they came within sight of the house.

“It is old Lady Rusland,—what a bore!” said Louisa. “I will make my escape: I would not be plagued with her on any account.”

“There is a much greater bore,—Mr. Trevelyan, driving up the park,” exclaimed Elizabeth, “I see his randem tandem,—I forget what he calls that odd carriage with those three piebald horses, one before another. What marvel could bring him at the heels of his aunt!”

“Both at once are really too much,” said Emily, “so let us retreat before we are seen.”

“Why, Emily, won’t you go in to see the dashing Mr. Trevelyan!” said Mrs. Wentworth.

“O go by all means, Emily!” said Elizabeth. “You said you hated perfection, so Mr. Trevelyan must suit you exactly; for certainly he cannot be accused of approaching too near to it.”

“Much too near in his own eyes,” said Emily, laughing.

“Well, mamma, if nobody else will go with you, I will,” said Louisa, who had been sedulously engaged in arranging her dress and curls ever since Mr. Trevelyan had been descried, “it would be cruel to leave you to go through it alone,”—and with a resigned air Louisa dutifully accompanied her mother, while Emily, as she and Elizabeth scudded away behind the sheltering screen of shrubs and trees, laughingly repeated these lines of Boileau’s—

“ Quelquefois de Facheux, arriverent trois volées
Qui du parc à l’instant assiegent les allées ;
Alors, *sauve qui peut*, et quatre fois heureux
Qui sait s’échapper, à quelque antre ignoré d’eux.”

At dinner, Mr. Wentworth, his countenance beaming with benignity, congratulated his niece upon her father’s safety, and upon the prospect of his wearing the laurels he had won, while they were yet green, in old England. “ And I am very glad my sister and you are not going to Sicily,” he added.

“ And I am afraid that I am sorry,” said Emily, ingenuously.

“ Sorry !” exclaimed Louisa. “ Sorry for your father’s return ! How strange !”

Emily coloured crimson. “ We should have seen my father much sooner had we gone,” she said. “ We should have been in Sicily before the time he expects to leave it. Besides, I think the voyage and change of climate would have been very beneficial to my mother’s health ; and I should so very much have liked to have seen Sicily !”

“ But it seems so selfish to be sorry that your father should enjoy the happiness of returning to his country !” said Louisa.

She encountered the flash of Count Waldemar’s eye, beneath which her’s sunk, while the colour mounted in her cheek.

“ My father, I fear, only comes home to be sent abroad again on another service,” said Emily, mildly.

“Pray does Sir John Delamere return with my uncle?” said Percival.

“My father does not mention it, so that I suppose not,” said Emily.

“O! then, you would have seen Sir John Delamere had you gone to Sicily,” said Louisa. “No wonder, then, it had charms!”

Emily’s face turned crimson; but it was with indignation at the tone and insinuation of her cousin. “Certainly,” she replied with spirit, “I shall always be happy to meet Sir John Delamere any where; though he had no part in my wish to visit Sicily.” Her tone, countenance, and manner, brought instant conviction of her sincerity to every one present, and Count Waldemar looked delighted.

Mrs. Wentworth now changed the conversation, and told the Count that Sir Reginald and Lady Rusland, and their nephew, Mr. Trevelyan, had called upon him, “And,” she added, “the old Baronet took at least half an hour to tell me, with many stiff bows and formal speeches, that his friend, Lord Oldcourt, had written to request him to shew you every attention during your stay in this part of the country; and he left his card and a profusion of fine speeches for you.”

“Lord Oldcourt, I perfectly remember; but, I think, I never saw Sir Reginald Rusland.”

“I don’t know how you should,” said Percival; “some great revolution of the globe must take place before he could be moved from Rusland Hall. There

you will see the *buckram baronet*, as we call him, in all his glory—and stiffness. But pray did Lady Rusland call upon the Count too?”

“Why, no;—I suppose I might be the ostensible object of Lady Rusland’s visit, though her real one, I suspect, was to see Count Waldemar,” said Mrs. Wentworth.

“Don’t be too much flattered, Count,” said Percival, “She’s as old as the hills, and entirely made of starch.”

“If she really be old,” said Count Waldemar, laughing, “she must be something quite new—at least to me; for I have not seen an old woman this age. The race is extinct.”

“O! Count Waldemar,” exclaimed Mrs. Wentworth, laughing, “you are really very severe.”

“Not at all: it is simply a fact. Ladies never do grow old now. Their dress, manners, and ideas, if not their faces, all are young; so that it is difficult in speaking of them or to them, to make any distinction between twenty and fourscore.”

“But Lady Rusland,” said Mrs. Wentworth, “is really that unique in modern days, an old woman; and a woman of the old school; old in every sense of the word, and proud of being old.”

“Then she must really be a prodigy,” said Count Waldemar. “Rouchefoucault truly says, ‘*Peu de gens savent être vieux.*’”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Wentworth, “but Lady Rusland

is old *in the extreme* ; she affects to be older than she really is ; and so strong is her contempt of the present age, and so high her admiration for past times, that I am persuaded the further back she could date her birth, the higher she would value herself."

"How you must admire her, Count !" said Percival, "since your admiration for an old woman is so great !"

"I am not quite sure," he said, "that she is exactly the kind of old woman that I do admire so much ; for it is not merely enough that a woman should bear age with dignity and propriety, but she ought also to sympathize with the young, to promote all their innocent amusements, and take a lively interest in their pursuits and pleasures ; in short, she should not only remember that she is now old, but that she once was young."

"But I am certain that she never was young," said Emily, with naïveté ; "it is impossible that she ever could have been young."

A universal laugh followed Emily's observation ; and it was agreed that Lady Rusland must have been born old.

"She is a very good kind of old woman, however," said Mr. Wentworth.

"Pity she was not more agreeable," said Elizabeth.
"She is so formal and so prim."

' Her eyes, lips, hands, and words, are put to school,
And each appointed feature has its rule.' "

“Dear old soul!” said Percival, “she always looks as if she had swallowed a poker. I suppose there never was so *upright* a woman. O! it is edifying to see her sitting perpendicularly erect,—her inflexible lips preserving their rigid line—the words dropping over them, one by one, like drops from a bottle; and never do they fail to lament the levity and degeneracy of the present generation.”

“And her hopeful nephew sneering in her face all the time,” said Mr. Wentworth, “as if to furnish a proof of it.”

“What, Trevelyan, was he here? And was he as amusing as usual? What did he entertain you with, Emily?”

“I did not see him,” said Emily.

“So you ran away! But what did he say to you, Louisa?”

“Nothing very particular,” said Louisa, scornfully.

“Why,” said Mrs. Wentworth, “he bestowed his chief attention, I think, upon a dog he brought with him; and he strolled about the room, switching his boots and whistling.”

“But did he say nothing?”

“Nothing that I remember; except that the day was ‘confoundedly’ hot, and that the weather had been ‘confoundedly’ wet, and that he had got ‘confoundedly’ soaked coming from town.”

“From town! What on earth took him up to town now?”

"To see the 'great mill' between Black Dick and the Game Chicken, with which his whole soul seemed full, even to overflowing. And he would have given us the particulars of every round, if we would have listened to him. One of these unfortunate wretches, the Game Chicken, I believe, is since dead ; but the exultation with which Mr. Trevelyan talked of the whole affair, was quite disgusting."

"I wonder he did not blush to acknowledge he had been present at such a scene," said Elizabeth.

"Blush !" repeated Mr. Wentworth. "He has neither sense nor feeling sufficient to blush at any thing ; at least at any thing wrong. If by chance he was caught doing any thing right, perhaps he might blush ; but there is not much danger of that."

The horses now came to the door, and the Coniston party set off.

During their ride, Count Waldemar kept close to Emily's side, watchful every moment lest her too high-spirited horse should again throw her into danger. But it was perfectly gentle ; and Emily assured him that he had never misbehaved before that morning.

On the top of the hill above the lake, they turned their horses to enjoy the view over the bright expanse of Windermere, spotted with woody islands, round which the gaily painted yachts were riding at anchor, their gay streamers waving in the evening breeze. The last rays of the setting sun threw a golden radiance over the glowing waters, the winding, woody

shores adorned with villas and gentlemen's seats, the jutting promontories, and deep indented bays : while, in the distance, the picturesque heights of Langdale Pike and Rydal Heads, rising in majestic beauty, closed the scene.

Count Waldemar remarked the striking resemblance between Windermere and the Lake Miösen, near Christiania ; and the conversation then turned upon lakes in general, and the lakes of Norway in particular ;—"which," he said, "really yield in beauty to none ; and which of course I admire beyond all others, because my childhood was spent among them."

"Are you then a native of Norway ?" said Emily.

"Yes ; I was born in Norway. Though my father was a Dane, my mother was a Norwegian ; and the early summers of my life were spent with her at her father's castle, on the singularly romantic and beautiful Lake Törgvillan, near Trönyem, amidst the Alps of Norway." Count Waldemar described, with all the enthusiasm of a native, the features of this unrivalled, and to Englishmen almost unknown, lake. "Nothing, indeed, can exceed the romantic beauty, the grandeur, the sublimity, and the exquisitely varied combinations of scenery which Norway presents," he said. "My first recollections are of its boundless forests of pine, its vast and deserted lakes, its gigantic rocks, and its eternal cataracts. But it was not the charm of the scenery that attached me to Norway ; for children I believe, are wholly insensible to picturesque

beauty of every description, and it is rather that I remember it with admiration now, than that I then admired it. But those were the scenes of early happiness; they are associated with the recollection of every childish enjoyment, of perfect light heartedness, and freedom from all restraint; and, above all, with the memory of my mother. After her death I visited those scenes no more."

A pause ensued, for a transient shade of emotion was perceptible in his voice and eye, as he named his mother, which Emily respected too much to speak. But he speedily resumed the conversation, amused her by a spirited account of the Norwegians, of the court and courtiers of Denmark, and of their primitive habits and ideas. "Such was the moderation of the Crown Prince," he said, "that his royal highness's expenditure fell short of that of most private English gentlemen; and indeed his whole revenues did not exceed five thousand a year."

They were now entering the deep shade of the woods, and Emily cantered forward to rejoin Elizabeth and her brother, who were a little in advance of them; and at a quick pace the whole party proceeded to the brow of the hill, where the Lake of Coniston extended its glassy mirror at their feet, embosomed in mountains.

A faint glow in the western sky still marked the spot where the sun had set behind the mountains. The moon had risen: her long line of unruffled radi-

ance streamed across the waters, and shed over the scene a softened and serene light, that harmonized with the stillness of evening, which was unbroken, except by the sound of a distant waterfall, and by the distant murmur of the wave of the lake gently breaking against the shore. All nature seemed at rest: and as the party descended the hill, and wound along the borders of the lake, they seemed to feel the influence and repose of the softened scene. Their voices were hushed, and they reached Coniston Hall in profound silence.

“We have rode here like a company of Quakers,” said Percival, as they entered the drawing-room, “the spirit never having moved us to speak.”

He presented Count Waldemar to Mrs. De Cardonnell. She perfectly remembered his father, whom she had met with during his residence in London. He was a complete diplomatic courtier, and had not greatly interested her. Not so his son, whom it was impossible to see and not admire. Previous to the war, she had visited most of the countries from which he had so recently returned, and their present state, as contrasted with their former, greatly interested her. She too was still a charming woman: youth and beauty had indeed faded, but the uncommon elegance of her person and manners, the air of distinction that characterized the high born, high bred lady,

—“The graceful ease
Which marks security to please;”

the unstudied, yet polished grace of every word and action,—above all, the taste and talent, and high cultivation of her mind,—these were charms over which time had no power, and which rendered it impossible to resist the fascination of her manners. Few possessed so much power to charm ; and Count Waldemar was charmed : and in his late ride home with his friend, he said so much in admiration of the mother, and so little of the daughter, that Percival rallied him upon having lost his heart to his aunt.

“ But you say nothing of my cousin ? ” he added.

“ She is generally considered a great beauty.”

“ I do not think her exactly a beauty ; ” said Count Waldemar ; “ but she is very fascinating.”

“ She is the sweetest creature in the world,” said Percival, who loved her as one of his own sisters, and, if possible, with stronger affection

CHAPTER II.

BOATING.

‘ Upon a *water*, by whose utmost brim
 Waiting to pass, he saw whereas did swim
 Along the shore as swift as glance of eye,
 A little gondelay, bedecked trim.

* * * * *

And therein sat a lady fresh and fair,
 Making sweet solace to herself alone,
 Sometimes she sang as loud as lark in air,
 Sometimes she laughed that nigh her breath was gone.

* * * * *

Eftsoones her shallow ship away did slide
 More swift, then swallow sheres the liquid sky,
 Withouten *helm* or pilot it to guide,
 Or winged canvas with the wind to fly.”

SPENSER’S FAERY QUEEN.

IN the grounds at a short distance from the house at Coniston Hall, upon a sloping lawn, open only to the lake, and inclosed on every other side by trees and flowering shrubs, stood a building called the Banquetting Room, a large, light, Gothic apartment, fitted up with exquisite taste,—in former days, no doubt, the scene of frequent conviviality,—now, the chosen retreat of every elegant pursuit. During the

months of summer, Emily usually spent her mornings here ; books, drawing, and writing, winged the hasty footed hours. Sometimes she waked from the music gallery the pealing organ's ecstatic swell,—sometimes sweeping the chords of her harp with a master's hand, she sang the finest strains of Italian music ;—and often, flying from all sedentary pursuits, she would unmoor her fairy skiff, which rode in front of the lawn, and skim over the blue bosom of the glassy lake, impelled only by her own light and feathering oars.

On the second morning of Elizabeth's visit, Mrs. De Cardonnell, leaving the two friends, as usual, engaged in their favourite occupations in their summer retreat, set off in her phaeton to make a distant call. At a short distance from the house, she met Count Waldemar, mounted on a pony, in a shooting dress ; and, stopping the carriage, she found that he and Percival Wentworth had set out immediately after breakfast, to shoot over to Coniston Hall, in which pursuit they had spent nearly five hours, and killed upwards of fifty head of game ; but still, unsatiated with murder, the indefatigable Percival had now gone upon the hills to look for grouse, leaving Count Waldemar to come forward to the house in search of “ metal more attractive.”

Mrs. De Cardonnell, having directed him where to find the young ladies, engaged him to dine with them, and left her commands for Percival Wentworth to do the same, drove on ; and Count Waldemar, having

despatched his servant to Esthwaite Court, to announce their stay, and bring back their clothes to dress, dismounted, and hastened through the grounds to the banquetting room ; to which he found his way without difficulty. He looked in at the open door, but he saw no one ; he spoke, but received no answer ; he listened, but heard no voices ; he entered, and found it, to his great disappointment, empty. He went forward into a small adjoining room, but there was nothing in it except a telescope and a Canary bird. He turned from the sunny oriel window, open to the floor, and redolent with the perfume of greenhouse plants, and sauntering to a table, he mechanically took up a book. It was a volume of Gibbon's Roman Empire. But " the fall of empires and the fate of kings " did not happen at this moment to interest Count Waldemar. He took up another,—“ Scenes and Costumes of Sicily ; ” a third,—“ Travels in Calabria.” Throwing them all down, he was on the point of going away, when, on a small table near a window, his eye was caught by a painting, and he turned to examine it. It was a miniature picture, more than half finished, of a young and very handsome military officer. Why Count Waldemar started back at the sight, as if a shot had struck him—why he again hastily returned, and fixed his gaze upon the noble features, the open brow, the clear commanding eye—why he relinquished his examination with a long drawn breath—we pretend not to explain.

Unconsciously his eye rested on a slip of paper lying near the portrait ; and he read, before he knew what he was doing, these lines :

“ Enshrined within this faithful heart
Thy image never shall depart,
Proud that the world proclaims thy fame,
And proud to boast thy honoured name.”

Count Waldemar started and turned away, shocked at the breach of confidence into which his pre-occupation of mind had involuntarily betrayed him, and honourably resisting the strong temptation he felt to read the rest of the verses. He observed that a blotted word upon the paper was still wet ; the writing therefore must have been recent, and the fair writer could not be far distant.

In a moment Count Waldemar was at the margin of the lake, eagerly looking round in every direction. A little gaily-painted boat, with two white figures in it, caught his eye : a glance convinced him that it contained those he sought, and hailing a man who was fishing in a boat near him, and holding up in his hand an argument more persuasive than the most powerful rhetoric, the boat drew near, and Count Waldemar literally jumped in amongst the fishes. But the usual consequences of such a plunge were reversed : instead of being food for them, they ultimately became food for him, the fine fresh char, which were flouncing about, finding their way, in due time, to the dinner table at

“ the Hall,” for they were all for “ the Lady Cardonnell,” as the grey-headed, but ruddy-cheeked old fisherman told him. The boat soon overtook that of which he was in pursuit, and Miss De Cardonnell willingly resigned her oars to him.

With the consent of the ladies he soon hoisted the sail ; and as he idly steered, and the little boat flew over the surface of the lake, he complimented the “ Lady of the Lake ” upon her extraordinary nautical skill.

“ It came by nature,” said Emily ; “ for being brought up by the side of the lake, half on land, half on water, I am almost an amphibious animal.”

“ And are you like those, with

‘ One foot on sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never ? ’ ”

“ O no ! ” she said, laughing, “ that reproach, you know, applies only to the lords of the creation : we ladies do not merit it ; and to prove it, to this one thing, at least, I am ‘ constant ever. ’ ”

“ Too constant,” said Elizabeth.

“ Too constant, I fear,” repeated Count Waldemar, in a tone so peculiar, that it struck Emily with surprise. She could not suspect that he was thinking of Sir John Delamere, whose unfinished portrait by her own hand, he did not doubt he had just seen. “ Too constant, I fear, to him ! ” thought he.

“ Emily is too constant—to sailing,” pursued Elizabeth, “ for she really runs into danger.”

“The Norwegian ladies,” said Count Waldemar, rousing himself from his fit of abstraction, “are remarkable for their skill in rowing and managing a boat, and they often undertake solitary voyages, which, upon our mountain lakes, beneath our stormy skies, are somewhat too perilous. Tragical catastrophes have repeatedly occurred; and sometimes the fair mariners

‘Part, like Ajut, never to return.’* ”

Elizabeth said that the rashness of the Norwegian ladies was at least equalled by that of Emily, who had even been known to continue sailing by moonlight, alone, upon the lake.

“But are you not afraid,” said Count Waldemar, “that some wandering sprite or discourteous knight should descend from the mountains, and carry you off?”

“Why ‘the Old Man’ of Coniston, who inhabits a high mountain at the head of the lake, is said to wander upon its shores at night; but I never met him, to my knowledge, at least: and as the spirit of chivalry will certainly not revive in ‘this laggard age,’ I am in no danger of a rencontre either with courteous or discourteous knights.”

“But the naiads of the lake,” said Count Waldemar, “when they see you skimming along, beneath the pale moon-beams, is there no danger of their mis-

* Campbell's Pleasures of Hope.

taking you for a sister, and carrying you down to their crystal caves?"

"No naiads," said Emily, "ever greeted me in any of my nocturnal voyages. But, excepting these blue-haired nymphs, who, I dare say, are most inoffensive beings, and the peaceable cottagers, whom I know to be so, there are really no inhabitants upon Coniston but ourselves; and it is so remote from the world, and so little frequented by strangers, that it is scarcely possible to meet with any adventure. On Windermere, indeed, I durst not indulge such romantic freaks."

They continued to sail about the lake, to the different stations from whence the views are considered most beautiful, until, to every one's surprise, they heard the sound of the gong, pealing the warning for dinner, from Coniston Hall.

"It is inexpressibly provoking," said Count Waldemar, "that whenever one is particularly happily engaged, that ill-natured old fellow, Time, always chooses to run his course with redoubled speed. If I could only catch him——"

"Why what would you do with him?" said Elizabeth.

"Turn his hour-glass upside down, and make the sands of the last two hours run over again?"

"I should like to clip his wings too," said Emily, "he always flies so fast."

"What, *always*?" said Elizabeth. "When the im-

moveable Miss Sitwells made their visit, or rather their visitation, yesterday morning, for instance? Or when Lady Rusland calls?"

"O no!" said Emily, laughing, "not then, certainly. Then 'Time stands still withal.' His hours and moments indeed, sometimes, drag heavily along, but his days, and months, and years fly far too fast."

"Then we seem quite agreed to cut his wings," said Count Waldemar.

"The difficulty would consist in catching him," said Elizabeth; "I never heard but of one way of doing it,—taking him by the forelock."

"There is the old man himself!" said Emily.

"Where?" said Count Waldemar, hastily looking round.

"There, upon the top of that mountain, just coming into sight,—behind that crag. 'The Old Man of Coniston!' Don't you see him sitting?"

"I really thought," said Count Waldemar, laughing, "you meant old Father Time. The Old Man of Coniston is that? Why he really is an admirable figure of an old man, and would make a capital portrait."

"And how patiently he would sit to have it taken!" said Emily.

"Suppose you take his portrait, Miss De Cardonnell," said Count Waldemar, significantly.

"That would not be very difficult, I should think," said Emily, "though I never even tried to take the portrait of any man."

“Not of any *old* man?” said Count Waldemar.

“Not of *any* man,” repeated Emily.

“Do you take portraits, Miss Wentworth?” asked Count Waldemar.

“Only of houses and trees,” she replied. “The ‘human face divine’ is far beyond me. But Emily takes portraits admirably: she made an inimitable likeness of old Nurse Martha.”

“Whom it was impossible *not* to take,” interrupted Emily, “her face is so striking.”

“But in general you must find women more difficult to take than men,” said Elizabeth.

“I never tried men,” remarked Emily again.

“Men!” repeated Count Waldemar, with bitterness, for he was thinking only of the unfinished portrait of Sir John Delamere which he had seen, “‘men are deceivers ever,’ the old song says; and women, what are they?”

“Believers,” said Emily, archly, with a smile.

They now approached the shore, upon which was standing Percival Wentworth, beside a pile of dead game, and brandishing in his hand a black cock.

“Look here!” he cried, “look Count! look Emily! I shot this myself!”

“And have you come to throw the spoils of your sylvan warfare at the feet of these ladies?” asked Count Waldemar.

“Yes; and myself too”, he said, leisurely extending his listless length upon the turf exactly across their path.

“ You murderous man !” said Elizabeth as she passed him ; “ have you really killed all these poor birds ?”

“ No, this is the murderous man ”, said he, seizing Count Waldemar by the leg as he was passing. “ He is the slayer. ‘ Conrad the Destroyer ’ he should be called. How heroic it sounds ! I ’ll write an epic poem, and celebrate your exploits, Count : though, by the way, I don’t see why I should not celebrate my own ;—and I will ! I ’ll write a second Dunciad.”

“ No man better qualified for the hero of a Dunciad than yourself, certainly”, said Count Waldemar.

Unheeding the general laugh, Percival began to detail his own prowess on the moors, thinking he had secured a listener in Count Waldemar, whom he held fast by the angle ; but the latter suddenly exclaimed “ A black cock ! A black cock !” Percival started up, and Count Waldemar, laughing, made his escape.

Mrs. De Cardonnell, who had strolled from the house to meet the boat party, now appeared. “ Why, Percival, what a host of partridges !” she exclaimed. “ If you make as much havoc among the enemies of your country as among the feathered tribes, you will be the most formidable captain in his Majesty’s service. But come, pray go to dress ; dinner is ready.”

“ I ’ll make an Adonis of myself in a moment”, he exclaimed ; and like an arrow out of a bow he flew to the house.

At dinner appeared Dr. Doran, a pleasant, sensible Irish physician, who had been settled all his life at

Hawkeshead, a little market town three miles from Coniston, and who was almost domesticated at Coniston Hall, where he was the acknowledged "*ami de famille*." The perfect nature and simplicity of his honest, unpretending character, the open-hearted frankness and bluntness of his speech, rendered more striking by his Irish idiom and accent, and above all, the brusque restlessness of his manner, amused and interested Count Waldemar extremely.

After the ladies left the dining-room, Dr. Doran, apropos to a celebrated copper mine upon the mountain of the Old Man, introduced his favourite hobby of geology, and finding that he was talking to one whose knowledge of science was fully equal to his own, the theme was pursued with all his characteristic ardour.

Count Waldemar gave Dr. Doran some curious information, entirely new to him, respecting the remains of antediluvian animals which had been discovered in various parts of Italy, and the singular impressions of fossil fish found on the top of Monte Bolca, near Verona, and many other remarkable vestiges of the Deluge. He described various striking phænomena which he had observed in the volcanoes of Vesuvius, Ætna, and Hecla, and drew some curious comparisons between them. Lastly, he excited Dr. Doran's astonishment by his account of the number of distinct strata of ancient lava upon which Rome, Naples, and all the ancient cities of Magna Græcia had been built; the

depth to which they extend beneath their ruins, and therefore the incontestable fact, that countless ages before their foundation, not only Vesuvius, but many a volcano besides, now unknown even by name, must have poured forth their floods of liquid fire, which had probably whelmed beneath their burning torrent, in the infancy of the world, other primeval cities, upon which Herculaneum and Pompeii—destined in their turn to be overwhelmed,—had been erected. Specimens of sixteen distinct floods of ancient lava, one above another, Count Waldemar had himself taken up and brought home from the Campagna of Rome.

“ To what an awful antiquity do these facts lead us,” observed Count Waldemar, “ when we remember that, at the foundation of Rome, even tradition retained no trace of those ancient forgotten volcanoes, or their eruptions, which had once covered the whole plains of southern Italy with liquid fire ! What ages must have passed before they could have become the fit habitations of men, or been crowned with luxurious harvests ! Yet in the earliest records of time, the vine, and the olive, and the fig tree were ripening their rich fruits upon these then fertilised tracts !”

The conversation, so far as the Doctor was concerned, might have proved interminable, had not Count Waldemar, at the first summons to coffee, broke it off, and repaired to the drawing-room, disturbing the repose of Percival, who, fatigued with the toils of the

day, had fallen asleep at the very first sounds of primitive, secondary, and transition rocks, and all the inexhaustible facts and theories which unwearied geologists discuss.

The evening flew away in conversation and in music, of which Count Waldemar was passionately fond. It had been the delight of his boyhood ; and in his juvenile excursions amongst the romantic scenery of Norway, his flageolet had waked the mountain echoes ; and from this little instrument he could still draw forth delicious strains of melody. His mother had been a proficient in music, and had taught him its principles so scientifically, and cultivated his taste so successfully, that being endowed by nature with a delightful voice, and an exquisite ear, the constant habit of hearing the best performers, both in Italy and Germany, had made him a fine singer without sacrificing much time to the acquisition. He sang some duets with Emily, to whom he taught some beautiful new German airs, which had not reached this country, and which she caught with her usual facility, and executed with her usual fine taste and expression. She happened to sing a simple air of Mozart's, to which he listened with intense delight. When she had finished, he said, with emotion, " It was my mother's favourite air." After a pause he added, " How powerfully do the early associations of music recall the scenes and friends of our childish days ! Do you remember those simple lines, Miss De Cardonnell ?—

‘ My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirr’d,
For the same sound is in mine ears
Which in those days I heard ! ’ ”

Emily repeated to him some stanzas from Leyden’s beautiful Ode to Scottish music, and enchanted by the beauty of her recitation, he begged her to try to remember some more verses.

“ I remember only another,” she said, “ which alludes to the Hindû belief that earthly music recalls to our memory the feelings and recollections of that Paradise which they believe our souls enjoyed in a state of pre-existence.

‘ Ah ! sure, as Hindû legends tell,
When music’s tones the bosom swell,
The scenes of former life return ;
Ere, sunk beneath the morning star,
We left our parent climes afar,
Immured in mortal forms to mourn.

‘ Or if, as ancient sages ween,
Departed spirits, half unseen,
Can mingle with the mortal throng,
’Tis when, from heart to heart we roll
The deep toned music of the soul
That warbles in our *native* song.’ ”

“ Beautiful ! ” exclaimed Count Waldemar. “ How fondly do we cling to the secret undefined mysterious hope, that in those moments when the strain that moved our hearts in childhood again breathes its spell around,

“ The lost, the loved, the dead are near ! ”

“ Music, indeed,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, “ has a spell which never can be broken, and even in extremity of age, in the total wreck of reason, and in the fiercest paroxysms of insanity it still maintains its power.”

“ And how unspeakably powerfully is it felt,” said Count Waldemar, “ when it recalls the memory of a mother ! I met with a beautiful passage upon this subject the other day, which struck me so forcibly, that I think I can repeat its very words. ‘ The charm of music ’, says the author, ‘ often arises from the effect of early associations : in such consist the power of national melodies ; for it is not in nature that at any period of life, or in any clime, a man should cease to deem those modulations beautiful which in his infancy and childhood he learned from his mother’s voice ;—the mother whose affection was so long around him as a shield, whose tears fell to chide his errors, and whose smiles were the reward of his infant virtues ;—whose steady judgement was his guide, whose faultless life was his example, and who in all things to him was the personification of God’s judgement upon earth.’* ”

Count Waldemar repeated these admirable lines with great feeling, and he read in Emily’s beautiful eyes how strongly her heart sympathized in emotion with his own.

* Dr. Arnott’s “ Elements of Physics.”

Percival observed that he surely must have often heard before the air he seemed to be so much struck with, for it was very popular.

“ Too often ”, he said, “ have I heard it ; for it is not the mere repetition of an air,—all depends upon the feeling and expression with which it is sung. The author I have just quoted most truly observes, that ‘ When a person destitute of native ear and talent for music performs a beautiful piece, however great may be his execution, the performance is as little pleasing to true judges, as would be the attempt of a foreigner, knowing only the alphabet of a language, to recite its masterpieces of expressive poetry.’ ”

CHAPTER III.

PROJECTS.

“ Nay,—if she love me not, I care not for her :
Shall I look pale because the maiden blooms,
Or sigh because she smiles—and smiles on others
Not I, by Heaven ! I hold my peace too dear
To let it, like the plume upon her cap,
Shake at each nod that her caprice shall dictate.”

OLD PLAY.

“ If you and Elizabeth will go back with us to Esthwaite Court, Emily,” said Percival Wentworth, as he pushed back his chair and rose from the breakfast table the next morning, “ we will take a short round over Coniston Manor, and then return to ride over with you.”

“ We cannot,” said Emily. “ My aunt Melmoth comes to us to-day.”

“ Then if we come back here, will you set us part of the way home, merely for a ride ?”

Although it was agreed that the ladies thus escorting the gentlemen was reversing the natural order of things, yet as both were going to ride, it was fixed that they should join company.

Mrs. De Cardonnell and Elizabeth then left the room. Emily, who was writing an answer to a note, remained after them.

Looking up with a smile, she said, "But, Percival, you know you are not famous for punctuality, so remember we shall neither wait for you, nor wonder, if you do not appear at the appointed time; but go and take our ride."

"O, I will bring him back! Punctuality is my peculiar virtue," said Count Waldemar, laughing.

"I thought, Count Waldemar, you were going with Dr. Doran to the copper mine upon the mountain of the Old Man, this morning?"

"So I was!—I had utterly forgotten it."

"And yet punctuality is your peculiar virtue!" repeated Percival, laughing.

Count Waldemar, laughing also, said, "To shew you that is my special and solitary virtue, I will take care to despatch the copper mine, and be here before the appointed time."

"'Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,' and so will I," said Percival.

"Then I must work hard to be ready," said Emily, "for I must positively finish what I am doing before my aunt arrives, that I may surprise her."

"And what are you doing?" said Percival.

"Painting."

"Painting what?"

"A portrait."

“ Of whom, may I ask ?”

“ That is a secret,” said Emily, with a smile.

“ I’ll engage I know. It is a certain handsome young officer, who shall be nameless.”

“ No ! not a *young* officer,” said Emily, but a blush crimsoned her cheek, and her eye dropped beneath Count Waldemar’s.

“ See how conscious she looks !” exclaimed Percival.

“ Conscious of being unjustly suspected,” said Emily proudly.

“ Nay, it is vain to deny it,” said Percival. “ You cannot deceive me.”

“ Do you think then that I would deceive you, or any one, and that I do not tell the truth ?” she asked, as virtuous indignation lightened in her lofty eye.

“ Nay, Emily, you take it so seriously ! I only thought you would not own the truth upon this one subject.”

“ That you, who have known me from childhood, should think me capable of falsehood and deceit upon any subject !” she continued, evidently deeply hurt.

“ What noble pride and dignity !” thought Count Waldemar, as he gazed upon her lofty countenance, beaming with truth and feeling. “ Who could believe deceit lurked there ? Yet my eyes were witnesses to it. It was the portrait of a *young* officer, and yet she denies it ! Surely after this there can be no truth in woman !”

In the mean time Percival was pouring forth his

disclaiming speeches: "Accuse you of falsehood! You, Emily, who are truth itself? Good God! how could you think it possible? No such idea ever entered my head, I give you my honour! I only meant to rally you a little. Come, I see you forgive me. But whose portrait is it then, Emily? Tell me. Any body you love?"

"It is the portrait of the man I love the best," said Emily, laughing and blushing.

"Well done!—And his name?"

"I won't tell you his name. I have a particular reason for keeping it secret at present."—And she laughed again.

"Well, well, never mind. I know his name."

The two gentlemen now set off. But Count Waldemar, before he left the room, said, with a forced smile, "that lest he should hazard his unimpeachable character for punctuality, by staying too late at the copper mine, he would relinquish his appointment to ride with the ladies, and return alone to Esthwaite Court." And with a cold bow he took his leave.

Emily's quick penetration had seen with resentment the suspicions Count Waldemar had conceived of the truth of her assertion, although she was too proud to seek to remove them. But she little suspected that he had seen the portrait.

The following morning, a note arrived from Mrs. Wentworth, to beg that Elizabeth would return home immediately, and that Mrs. De Cardonnell and Emily,

and Lady Melmoth, would accompany her, to assist her with their advice in making arrangements for a ball, which Mr. Wentworth intended to give,—or what is the same thing, which his wife and daughter intended he should give, the following week, in honour of Percival Wentworth's coming of age. She also announced the long expected arrival of her Irish nephew, Henry Dormer, with his sister Harriet, a merry untutored romp of fifteen. They were orphan children of a deceased sister of Mrs. Wentworth's, who had married a gentleman of high family and fortune in Ireland. Young Dormer had also just come of age; so that this ball was intended to celebrate the double majority of the English and Irish heir.

Accordingly the next day, the ladies from Coniston Hall went to Esthwaite Court.

Count Waldemar did not appear until dinner was just going upon the table. His bow to Emily was cold and distant. Her's to him colder still—proud, almost haughty.

When he entered, Mr. Wentworth was standing near the window, intently examining something. “Very like. Beautifully painted! I should have known it any where,” he said as he closed the case.

“What is that? Let me see it?” said Percival, who had just entered the room, eagerly seizing it.—“Ah, Emily! you little cheat!—Is it so? How you took me in!—upon my word it is admirable! How could you manage to make so much of such a hideous

thing!—You could do wonders indeed with a good subject. I wish you would take *me*.”

Every one laughed at Percival’s humourous air of assumed conceit.

“ Let Count Waldemar see it,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ Do you perceive any resemblance Count to any one you ever saw ? ”

“ I !——no,——none whatever.”

“ Yet you once saw the original,—long ago.”

“ Indeed !—It is a very fine face ; but I have no recollection of ever having seen it.”

“ And do you see no resemblance to it in any of the present company ? ” asked Mrs. Wentworth.

“ None,” said Count Waldemar, looking round with surprise.

“ Emily is thought strongly to resemble her father,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ Her father !—General De Cardonnell !—Is this ? ” —And a glance from Count Waldemar to Emily, which expressed all he felt, brought a light to her eye, and a glow to her cheek, that fixed his admiring gaze. The portrait hung neglected in his hand.

“ Yes ; it is the portrait of General De Cardonnell, when young,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ You said you once remembered having seen him when he called upon your father when you were a boy.”

“ True,” said Count Waldemar, looking absent. “ But, may I ask, when did you take this likeness, Miss De Cardonnell ? ”

“Never,” said Emily. “This is merely a copy from the only portrait of my father; one which was taken in his youth.”

“And that old faded daub is the original,” said Mr. Wentworth, producing a miniature deserving all the opprobrious epithets he bestowed upon it. “It has no merit except that of being a strong resemblance, without spirit, expression, or even passable execution. Really, Emily, you are quite an artist. It is very like what he was when he was Major De Cardonnell, two and twenty years ago, when you married him, Mary,” he added, turning to his sister.

Count Waldemar felt sincerely ashamed of the rash precipitance with which he had concluded that the portrait of the young officer must be that of Sir John Delamere; and still more that for a single moment he had allowed himself to believe *her* guilty of falsehood, upon whose open brow truth and honour were legibly impressed. He drew near and addressed her. His deep respect, his expressive look, his tone, and manner, all marked his deep sense of his transient injustice, and pleaded far more powerfully for forgiveness than any words could have done; and he soon felt that he was forgiven. The mute admiration that spoke in his eloquent eye, his insinuating speech, and delicate devoted attentions, were homage far more flattering than compliments or praise.

A Mr. Egremont had arrived at Esthwaite Court that morning, a very grave, serious, and reasoning

young man. He always wore spectacles, being short sighted, which added to his natural, or rather unnatural solemnity. He was the living exemplification of that much desired, but most undesirable, and fortunately rare union, of "an old head upon young shoulders." He argued every point, reasoned upon the veriest trifle, with the most logical precision; never understood a jest, and had not the most remote idea of what was meant by wit. Rarely indeed was he ever seen to laugh, but when he did, which was always at some notable instance of ignorance, the cachinnation was tremendous. Stores of learning were registered in his brain. He was undeniably one of the first mathematicians of the age. He had applied his knowledge to science; and both in astronomy and geology, especially in the measurement of crystals, the depth of his calculations, and importance of his exact and laborious inductions, had been of the utmost utility. So that he was in high estimation as a Fellow of the Royal Society, although as a fellow of good society he was considered a great bore. Similarity of scientific pursuits had allied him with Mr. Wentworth, to whom he usually paid an annual visit. As he had never met with any young woman so thoroughly well informed, so deeply versed in natural philosophy and science, and so perfectly amiable, unaffected, companionable, and good tempered as Elizabeth Wentworth, Mr. Egremont had gradually conceived a cool, calculating, rational, and determined partiality for her; and had

resolved to make her an offer of his hand. He calculated, however, that it would be too soon to propose during this visit, and that after making due demonstrations, he must come back again for that purpose.

That he had any such intention, Elizabeth never suspected. She had often talked to him from pure good nature, because nobody else would ; and she could persuade him to do what nobody else could. She had actually made him dance; and he went through the various capers and evolutions which she required of him in the most solemn and sententious manner imaginable.

“ I think, Elizabeth,” said Emily, archly, when the ladies adjourned to the drawing-room after dinner, “ Mr. Egremont’s attentions to you are very *serious*.”

Elizabeth laughed with genuine mirth. “ To be sure they are,” she replied. “ His worst enemy never could accuse him of any *attention* or intention that was not *serious*, for he is a most serious personage.”

Mrs. Wentworth, however, more quick-sighted than her inexperienced daughter, clearly saw that Mr. Egremont seriously meditated to offer himself to her ; but as he was an independent gentleman of good family, and possessed of large landed property in a neighbouring county, and as Elizabeth was not a beauty, she thought the match by no means undesirable. She also discovered, what indeed was very apparent, that the young Irish heir was “ in love very deep ” with her eldest beautiful daughter Louisa.

“How do you like Henry Dormer?” was her first question to Mrs. De Cardonnell, on leaving the dining-room.

“A fine, spirited, good-tempered, well-bred young man; far more finish about him, too, than I expected, considering he is so young,—and Irish,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“I am very glad you like him,” said Mrs. Wentworth; and she momentarily looked at her beautiful daughter, of whom Mr. Dormer’s admiration had been extremely marked. “But now for the ball,” she exclaimed; and an interesting discussion ensued upon this important subject, which, regardless of the appearance of the gentlemen, Mrs. Wentworth continued in the same strain.

“But the greatest difficulty is,” she went on in a tone of perplexity, “the want of men. Actually, I don’t know how to get a man! There is not one in the whole country. Here, indeed, we have four.”

“Four!” exclaimed Mr. Wentworth, smiling good-humouredly. “Only four! So then *I* go for nothing!”

“My sister only means that you are not a dancing man,—not a beau, brother,” said Lady Melmoth, mildly.

“Not a beau!” exclaimed Mr. Wentworth, pretending to survey himself all over with an air of great mock admiration. “Not a beau! I think I’m a most remarkable beau. I don’t know what you would

have. And there is Mr. Armathwaite, and Mr. Weston, and Sir Reginald Rusland, with his embroidered satin waistcoat. Where will you find such a beau?"

"Nonsense! I want young men," said Mrs. Wentworth, "dancers."

"Is that all? I'll engage to find you as many young men,—and dancers,—as you can desire."

"Indeed!—and pray who?"

"Fine able-bodied youths,—indefatigable dancers,—that would have danced at *my* ball till daybreak."

"The harvest supper! A set of bumpkins at a ball!"

"Then suppose you ask the *élite* of the Yeomanry Fencibles?"

"Worse and worse! A set of rough farmers and 'statesmen!'"* What shall I do, Count Waldemar? Can you hit upon any expedient to get dancers?"

"In *my* native country", said the Count, "there is a forest demon, worshipped with many a superstitious rite and prayer, who is said to be a marvellous musician, and when he sits among the branches of the trees and fiddles, all the bears, and foxes, and wild deer, and goats, and 'the cattle from a thousand hills' assemble, and dance with uncouth steps to his magic

* Cumberland "statesmen", as they are called,—rather a numerous body,—are men possessed of small landed estates, which they usually cultivate themselves, and which have descended from sire to son for generations; so that, although landed proprietors, they do not differ in manners and appearance from farmers.

minstrelsy. It is a superstition evidently borrowed from the Grecian Orpheus ; but it is to this day devoutly believed among the peasants of Norway. Now if this said forest demon would play first fiddle at your ball, there would be no want of dancers, what between the deer, the cows, and the brood mares with their fillies."

" But as neither the Grecian nor the Scandinavian Orpheus will condescend to visit Westmoreland, I fear I shall get no four-footed partners for the ladies," said Mrs. Wentworth, laughing.

" Not unless you can engage Miss De Cardonnell to play upon her harp ; and then, like the harp of Orpheus, all the brutes would dance to it."

" Oh, Count Waldemar !" said Emily reproachfully, shaking her head and laughing.

" Pity we had not the harp of Orpheus at balls, however, in these days, since there is such lack of partners," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, " for it would make not only the brutes, but the trees dance."

" So you might set all the woods in motion," said Elizabeth.

" And the whole park in commotion," said Count Waldemar. " The clumps would dance the grand round, and the old avenue, pair by pair, lead down the middle, and cast off."

" We might set to an old oak," said Emily, " and poussêt with a spruce fir. Certainly there would be no want of partners."

“ Wooden ones, however,” said Elizabeth.

“ At least you would have plenty of *boughs* (beaux),” said Percival.

“ You incorrigible punster !” exclaimed Mrs. Wentworth. “ However, you may all laugh, and be as witty as you please. But what am I to do ? Where am I to get men ? Percival, can’t you enlist us a few recruits ?”

“ Some of my awkward squad ? You shall have them all, and welcome.”

“ Pshaw ! I mean officers,—dashing hussars ! Where are all your regiment ?”

“ Most of the precious youths are at Canterbury, I suppose : if they were at Coventry it would be no matter. They are far too fine to dance. When asked, they drawl out, with a vacant stare of surprise at such a barbarous proposition, ‘ *The Royal Rangers don’t dance !* ’ ”

“ What consummate affectation !” exclaimed Count Waldemar, laughing. “ How you must annoy them, Wentworth !”

“ Yes. They will rejoice as much to be quit of me, as I shall of them. But my exchange cannot take place till November.”

“ I wish we had a military quarter near here,” said Mrs. Wentworth, musing.

“ I beg leave to protest against it !” exclaimed Mr. Wentworth. “ Establish no military quarter here, I beseech you,—to destroy at once my partridges and my privacy.”

“ I wish we could raise a few officers, however,” said Mrs. Wentworth.

“ Suppose you get some of the dragon’s teeth that Cadmus sowed, which sprung up armed men ; that will be the very thing for you.”

“ Dragon’s teeth !” said Percival. “ If you want dragon’s teeth, draw that old she-dragon’s, Mrs. Tempest’s, and sow them on a hot-bed, and they will spring up like mushrooms.”

“ Dragoons, not dragons ! A ready made crop of officers !” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing. “ How convenient !”

Count Waldemar now mentioned that he had heard from Mr. Trevelyan, whose call he had been returning in the morning, that Colonel Ormond, who he understood was a relation of his and Sir Reginald Rusland’s, was expected upon a visit at Rusland Hall every day. “ I knew him in France,” he added ; “ he was a *détenu*.”

“ Is he a man of fashion ?” asked Mrs. Wentworth.

“ Of the highest, in his own opinion,” said Count Waldemar, with a smile ; “ however, he is decidedly a fashionable.”

“ And what sort of an officer is he ?” asked Percival.

“ Admirably adapted for the ‘ Royal Rangers,’” said Count Waldemar, with a smile.

Mr. Wentworth with sudden recollection now exclaimed, “ I had forgotten,—Lord Ardentower with

his family is coming down immediately. I met the steward to-day."

"And dear Lady Harriet,—is she coming?" asked Louisa, who had been flirting apart all this time with Mr. Dormer; "I wonder she did not write to me."

"Both the young ladies are coming, and Lord Borodale too. All the family are expected the end of this week."

"Lord Borodale!—that is fortunate!" said Mrs. Wentworth. "I have not seen him since he was a boy. I hear he is a very fine young man."

Count Waldemar said he knew him intimately, and spoke of him in the highest terms.

"And now let us have some music and a quadrille," said Percival, starting up; "Come Emily."

Quadrilles had been originally introduced into that neighbourhood by some French officers, prisoners of war on parole, who were stationed at the little town of Brayness, not many miles from Coniston Hall; and whenever the families of Coniston Hall and Esthwaite Court met, which was very frequently, these now popular, but then almost unknown dances were performed upon the carpet, to the music of the harp and piano-forte, played by Mrs. Wentworth and Mrs. De Cardonnell. There were exactly enough dancers among themselves to make up a quadrille. Percival Wentworth and his cousin Harriet Dormer, who had struck up a violent flirtation, formed one couple; Louisa Wentworth and Mr. Dormer another; Emily and

Count Waldemar a third ; and Elizabeth Wentworth and Mr. Egremont a fourth. And the precision and solemnity with which the latter performed every figure, exactly as if he was solving an abstruse problem in mathematics, afforded no small amusement to the rest of the party.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BALL.

“ A nymph of rosy lips, and radiant eyes,
Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise ;
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,—
By day the frolic, and the dance by night,
Who frowns with vanity, who smiles with art,
And sets the latest fashion of the heart.”

JOHNSON.

“ The form alone let others prize,
The features of the fair ;
I look for spirit in her eyes,
And meaning in her air.”

“ *La beauté sans vertu est une fleur sans parfum.*”

“ Dancing is the poetry of motion.”

“ I WONDER if it will be a match ? ” said Emily, after musing a few minutes, as if thinking aloud, as she was proceeding to Esthwaite Court with her mother on the day of the ball.

“ What match can you be thinking of ? ” asked Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ Between Louisa Wentworth and Mr. Dormer. He seems ‘ in love very deep ’ with her, and she decidedly encourages him.”

“ O ! she would encourage any and every man ! She does not care a straw for him ; but *that* would not prevent her marrying him, if she had no greater offer.”

“ My dear mother ! what an opinion of her you must have !” said Emily. “ Do you really think she would sacrifice herself to make a mercenary, ambitious marriage ?”

“ She would think it no sacrifice,” replied Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ Marriage with her is a mere affair of calculation. Her sole object is to unite herself to rank and wealth ; forgetting that rank without principle meets with contempt not honour ; and that wealth, however immense, will inevitably be dissipated by gambling and extravagance. Yet, without any consideration of moral character, Louisa would marry the first fashionable prodigal who offered to her, provided he possessed rank and fortune.”

“ But supposing she did not love this fashionable prodigal of rank and fortune, and that she did love another ?” said Emily.

“ Her estimation of men,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, “ is entirely regulated by their admiration of her—not by their own character or merit. He who flatters her vanity the most, will go the nearest to touch her heart—or at least her fancy—which stands her instead of it. She would prefer the most unprincipled coxcomb, or profligate, who did admire her, to a man of the highest character and talents, who did not.”

“ It is very natural to like those who like us,” said

Emily with a smile ; “ and not *very* unnatural to be a little pleased with a great deal of admiration. But surely, mamma, you cannot think it possible that the mere admiration of a worthless, despicable man would gain Louisa’s love ? ”

“ Love of admiration with Louisa swallows up every other love. It is her ruling passion ; and, like every other selfish passion, ‘ with increase of appetite it grows on what it feeds on ’ ; so that rather than abstain, it swallows any food that is offered. No flattery, however gross, is rejected,—no admirer, however contemptible, disdained. Most girls would be content with one admirer, such as young Dormer ; but you see how piqued and discontented Louisa is, because she cannot attract Count Waldemar’s homage also ; and even Mr. Trevelyan’s insensibility provokes her.”

“ Why, mamma, you are making her out to be a complete coquette.”

“ And so she is, or at least will be ; for at present she is too intent upon making a good establishment to allow her nature to have its bent. But whenever she marries, she will be a finished coquette, for, I am sorry to say, that in this age almost all the coquettes are married women.”

“ Married women ! ”

“ Yes, Emily, married women ; who, instead of trying to make their husbands happy, are trying to make other men miserable.”

“ And how miserable they themselves must be ! ”

“ Yes, a coquette must certainly be the most miserable being in the world ; for while one votary refuses to bend the knee at her shrine, the crowds who do, yield her no satisfaction.

“ And so you really think Louisa a selfish, heartless coquette, whose sole animating principle is vanity !— Well, she is very pretty ; and flattery and admiration may have turned her head, but I hope not corrupted her heart. She has not her sister’s strong mind and sense, to enable her to appreciate beauty and admiration as they deserve.”

“ Nor has she her sister’s generous heart and disposition,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ However, mamma, you must allow Louisa is very lively and good humoured ?”

“ The most lively and good humoured creature in the world where she is pleased and admired ; but her good humour requires the stimulus of continual incense to keep it alive. If the offering ceases for a moment, the deity frowns.”

“ But indeed, mamma, it is universally said that she is very animated and pleasant.”

“ Yes, in company ; but how listless and spiritless, and *ennuyée* she becomes, when left alone with her own family !—Where is her fine flow of spirits then ?— When did she exert herself for their amusement, or enjoy the pursuits and affections of domestic life merely for their own sakes ? She evidently thinks that,—

‘ Where none admire, ’tis useless to excel,
Where none are beaux, ’tis vain to be a belle.’

You know what the Prince De Ligne says, Emily, ‘ Je n’ai pas bonne opinion de ceux qui ne sont pas aimables dans leur famille. Sans parler du mauvais cœur qui cela suppose, il faut être très peu riche, pour se montrer si économe d’esprit et de grace.’

“ But here we are,—so a truce to animadversion or detraction, if such it seem to you, dear Emily. But mark my words: to-night she will exert every power to fascinate Lord Borodale; and if she succeed, she will neglect for him poor Mr. Dormer, whom now she counts as her secure slave. If not, then am I mistaken in Louisa.”

The party at dinner was comparatively small; but in the evening “ all the beauty and fashion of the lakes,” and some who could boast neither of beauty nor fashion, crowded to Esthwaite Court.

The staircase, the reception room, the ball room, the flirting room, the card room, and the supper room, were as gay as a flood of light from splendid lustres and reflecting mirrors, over chalked floors, exotic plants, bowers of roses, arches of evergreens, fine paintings, and illuminated conservatories could make them;—in short, they were as splendid and beautiful, as by natural taste, unassisted by the magic wand of another Merlin in the shape of a London upholsterer, ball-rooms could be made.

The ball was led off by Miss Wentworth and Mr. Dormer.

Dancing was an accomplishment in which Louisa particularly excelled. Never did she look more brilliantly beautiful; and never did the symmetry of her figure, and the grace of her steps, appear to more advantage. She felt that the eyes of an admiring multitude were fixed upon her; and she looked and moved with all the triumph and the pride of conscious beauty.

The audible buzz of admiration which sounded through the room was more delightful to her ear than the softest music:—but more delightful still was the open, undisguised adulation of her partner, so unlike the cautious attentions, and whispered flattery, to which she had been accustomed in her English admirers, who always seemed anxious that no eye should observe their homage; while he, on the contrary, with true Irish frankness, seemed to glory in making his as apparent as possible; and such was the *éclat* of his devoted admiration, that Louisa's vanity and spirits were raised to the highest pitch.

Elizabeth, whose intelligent countenance was lighted up with even more than usual animation, followed her with delighted eyes. Conscious that she herself possessed no pretensions to beauty, she beheld with a pleasure and pride wholly unmixed with envy, the admiration which the superior personal charms both of her sister and her cousin excited.

“What a display of beauty!” said Mr. Beauchamp, a gentleman who was on a visit at Lord Ardentower's

villa. "Really, the Lancashire Witches deserve their fame."

"And pray which of the witches may have bewitched you?" asked his Lordship.

"Why, I hardly know. The prettiest girls in the room are the rival cousins; but I am divided between them. Miss Wentworth is the most brilliant, but Miss De Cardonnell is perhaps the most elegant and attractive. Pray which do you admire the most, my Lord?"

"Miss Wentworth will be admired first, and Miss De Cardonnell last," said his Lordship.

"And least?"

"No; longest. She will be admired when her cousin is forgotten."

"So then your Lordship gives the palm to Miss De Cardonnell?"

"To be sure I do. She has far more grace, and elegance, and expression; 'more mind in every look and motion.'"

"Yes, certainly; she looks, indeed, a superior being; but I should say Miss Wentworth was more decidedly a beauty."

"A beauty!" repeated Lord Ardentower. "Yes! But

"What's female beauty but an air divine,
Through which the mind's all gentle graces shine?
They, like the sun, irradiate all between;
The body charms, because the soul is seen.
Hence men are often captives of a face,
They know not why, of no peculiar grace;

Some forms, though bright, no mortal man can bear ;
Some none resist, though not exceeding fair." *

" These two beauties, however," said Mr. Beauchamp, " are both ' exceeding fair ' ; but look at Miss Wentworth's brilliant complexion and sparkling black eyes."

" Eyes that sparkle with vanity, and complexion like a painted doll. She reminds me of a head in a hairdresser's window."

" O, my Lord !" exclaimed Mr. Beauchamp, laughing, " you are very severe ; though I protest there is some truth in the comparison ; only she is not in the least vulgar, and is certainly very pretty."

" Very ;—so is the doll. But the one interests me as much as the other ; for if there be occasionally more expression in the lady's than the doll's face, it is not an amiable or interesting expression. But look at Miss De Cardonnell's animated, expressive countenance, continually varying with every thought and feeling ! Look at the soft brilliance of her dark blue eyes, glowing beneath their long eye-lashes !—Look at her mouth, in which the great and true expression of the human face consists,—the beauty of the parted lips—the fine contour of the face—the noble air of the head—the ease, the dignity, the self-possession—the purity, the feeling, and the soul that breathes within !"

" Painted *con amore* !" exclaimed Mr. Beauchamp

* Young.

smiling. “ Really your Lordship’s admiration is most eloquent.”

“ I am an enthusiastic admirer of beauty, Beauchamp,” said Lord Ardentower, “ especially when united with fine expression. Much as I admire a masterpiece of painting, I admire still more that great masterpiece of nature, a fine human face; for in its varying expression I can read the history of the human heart. I judge of men far more by what I see than what I hear; by how they look, than what they say. It is the countenance, the expression, the involuntary glance, the tone of voice,—not the words (for they are generally false, or conventional, or unmeaning,)—that betray the real sentiments and character. I have not spoken half a dozen words to Miss De Cardonnell, and yet I am convinced I am not mistaken in her character.”

“ Your Lordship then reads her mind in her face—unlike Desdemona, who read Othello’s visage in his mind?”

“ I knew her well as a child,” said Lord Ardentower; “ and I remember some infant traits of noble and generous feeling, that made me love the engaging little creature. But even if I had never seen her before, I think I could have read in that speaking countenance, at the very first perusal, talents, cultivation, generosity, sensibility, and all that train of pure and disinterested virtues which in woman alone, reign, uncontaminated by baser matter.”

“ I should rather have seen, in the animation of

her countenance, and the occasional archness of her eye, all the feminine graces of her sex."

"Right, quite right!" said Lord Ardentower. "She has all the enchanting playfulness of youth and wit, and innocence."

"Look at the magic of that smile!" exclaimed Mr. Beauchamp. "She really is *very* fascinating—your Lordship has talked me into a fit of admiration," he added, laughing, "just as in a picture gallery one sometimes passes over an exquisite but chaste masterpiece, until its merit is pointed out by some skilful connoisseur——"

"And your eye is caught by more showy colouring, like the brilliant cheeks and eyes of Miss Wentworth."

"Exactly; and Miss Wentworth really is a beautiful and fashionable girl, though certainly Miss De Cardonnell is in much better taste," said Mr. Beauchamp. "Above all, I admire the nature and simplicity of her manners, and her perfect freedom from all affectation."

"She is divine!" exclaimed a little man in a green coat, who had been listening to, and endeavouring for a long while to push himself into their conversation, and who was pretending to look at Miss De Cardonnell through an eye-glass, while he was really eyeing Lord Ardentower. "Quite divine, my Lord!"——

Lord Ardentower stared.

"Beautiful hair and teeth! Those dark glossy

ringlets contrast beautifully with her fair skin—don't you think so, sir?" (to Mr. Beauchamp.)

"Unquestionably!" said Mr. Beauchamp, with a bow.

"But," said the little man heroically, putting forward one leg, and trying to imitate the tone of Lord Ardentower, "What I admire is her soul!"

"And I her foot!" said Mr. Beauchamp with a smile.

Lord Ardentower burst out into a laugh.

"Mr. Appleby admires the sole of her foot," he exclaimed, as he turned on his heel, leaving the little man quite crest fallen,—for the joke being a bad one, was immediately circulated around the room, that '*Mr. Appleby had fallen in love with the sole of Miss De Cardonnell's foot.*' Of course it drew everybody's attention to her foot, which really was remarkably pretty and little. Lord Ardentower and Mr. Beauchamp watched her narrowly, while this "excellent joke," and the notice it attracted, were communicated to her. But her quick, deep blush was of genuine modesty; her transient laugh, untinctured by the smallest shade of affectation; and her gay, good humoured remark, was calculated to turn the attention from her foot and herself, upon the absurd things that might be reported from the mistake of a single word.

It all proved the absence of vanity. Louisa's countenance lowered, at seeing universal attention and admiration directed from herself, even for a moment.

Again Lord Ardentower called Mr. Beauchamp's attention to the fair cousins. "Observe," he said, "how trifles mark the character!—Look at these girls, even in a dance. You may plainly see that the one is intent only upon observing what others think of her, and the other upon what she thinks of them."

"Quite true!" said Mr. Beauchamp, laughing, "I see it clearly. Your penetration, my Lord, really can read the real character. To your eye, every man, or at least every woman, seems to have a glass in the breast."

He now hastened to join his partner, Lady Harriet St. Leger, Lord Ardentower's youngest daughter, who re-entered the room, which she had quitted to change her shoes, which had been too tight.

Lord Ardentower sauntered down the room, and stopped beside his son, who was standing nearly opposite Miss Elizabeth Wentworth.

"A pleasant, sensible girl, that youngest Miss Wentworth!" said Lord Ardentower.

"Charming!" exclaimed Lord Borodale.

"Charming!" repeated the Earl, rather startled at the enthusiasm of his manner, "no—not charming either,—though it is charming, certainly, to meet with so much sense and talent, and unaffected amiable manners in that usually most insipid article—a young lady. I sat next her during coffee, and she was——"

"Beautiful!" interrupted Lord Borodale.

"Beautiful!" replied the Earl with increased

amazement. “ Why Ferdinand, are you dreaming ? What are you gazing after ? ” continued he, taking up his glass to follow the direction in which his son’s eyes were eagerly bent.

“ I beg your pardon. What did you say, sir ? ” and without waiting a reply, his Lordship hastily walked down the room to Miss Wentworth, who had just reached the bottom of the dance, and entered into earnest conversation with her.

“ So ! ”—said the Earl to himself, “ that won’t do ! ”

Lord Borodale remained spell-bound ; while Louisa continued mercilessly to level against his Lordship’s heart the whole artillery of her charms—

“ Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles.”

But in the midst of this animated flirtation, the dance was suddenly interrupted. Lady Harriet’s foot had slipped upon the floor, where some wax had dropped from a lustre, she had fallen down, and almost fainting with pain and confusion, she was supported to a seat. Louisa flew to her, and while she knelt down in the most graceful attitude imaginable to support her foot, which appeared to be sprained, she poured forth a thousand expressions of sympathy and sorrow. Lord Borodale’s attention was involuntarily drawn from his sister to the fair form before him, and enchanted before with her beauty, he was doubly enchanted with the feeling and sensibility she

displayed. Seeing Lady Harriet nearly fainting, Emily desired Count Waldemar to throw open the window, and the air which blew in seemed to revive Lady Harriet as much as it discomposed her friend Louisa, whose beautiful ringlets were disordered by the breeze. Dropping the foot, she hastily retreated, followed by all the young ladies who had crowded around the fainting fair with expressions of tender sympathy and compassion, leaving Emily only beside her.

Lord Ardentower could not restrain a smile. "What a gale is this?" he exclaimed. "Sensibility is wafted away upon its wings! My dear Miss De Cardonnell, how does it happen that yours is not blown away with your curls? How can you sit there, supporting Harriet and holding salts to her head, without sympathizing in the agitation of your ringlets?"

Lady Harriet now languidly looking up, said she felt much better, and having drunk some of the water which Count Waldemar had brought, she was supported out of the room, attended by her sister and by Mrs. Wentworth.

"Well, Ferdinand," said Lord Ardentower, sometime afterwards, seeing his son standing admiring Miss Wentworth, who, not unconscious of his gaze, was seated with her partner, Mr. Dormer, beneath a transparency on the opposite side of the room,—“Well, Ferdinand, are you awake yet? Can you see, hear, and understand?"

“ I hope so,” said Lord Borodale.—“ Why ?”

“ I suspect not. I suspect your eyes, ears, and understanding are not yet opened. That is a very pretty transparency, opposite, of the Union—the sister kingdoms meeting in a fraternal embrace.”

“ I see the transparency, and I hear your bull, Sir,” said Lord Borodale with a smile.

“ You may hear, but you don’t understand ; and you may see the transparency ; but transparent as it is, you don’t see through it—nor through my meaning. That is a representation of the union between England and Ireland, which, unhappily, has taken place ; but below it there is a representation of the union which happily is to take place.”

“ What do you mean, sir ?—What union ?”

“ The union now *in contemplation*.”

“ What union is in contemplation, sir ?”

“ Why you are *contemplating* it at this very moment !—I told you that you could neither see nor understand. The union of the rose and the shamrock, to be sure—

‘ The sweet English rose, which will soon be entwin’d
With a sprig of shillelah and shamrock so green.’

But that rose, ‘ charming,’ and ‘ beautiful,’ (your own epithets, Ferdinand,) as it appears, has a thorn, which will wound whoever clasps it ; and in that union the thistle will spring up.”

“ Really,” exclaimed Lord Borodale, somewhat

impatiently, "really you are so emblematical and so enigmatical, sir——"

"And really you are so pragmatical, and so stupid, sir," interrupted Lord Ardentower laughing. "Open your eyes, which I told you were not open, and look at that pair seated below the transparency; emblematical of the union between Ireland and England—though upon much more friendly terms than those kingdoms. Don't you see they are discussing the preliminaries, and that the union between them will soon be amicably settled;—and a good *political* union too for the English side it will be, like that between the two countries, for young Dormer's estate must be a very good thing. What do you suppose it to be worth, Dr. Doran?"

"Ten thousand a year, at least, my Lord, now that it is so much improved, and all the debt paid off."

"All paid off, is it? Really the young man has been most fortunate in a guardian in every sense of the word."

"Indeed, my Lord, he has. Mr. Wentworth has been quite a father to him."

"And will be one, I dare say! Ha, Doctor! However it will be a very eligible match."

"That it will!" said the Doctor, "for he is a fine spirited, honourable fellow!—A true Irishman!"

"A true Irishman!—that's excellent, 'pon my honour," exclaimed a gentleman who was lolling upon a sofa behind them. "You're a true Irishman,

I think. You Irishmen always sound your own praises."

"If we do sound our own praises, we only imitate your own example, Colonel Ormond, and for the same reason, I suppose," said the Doctor, deliberately taking a pinch of snuff, "because nobody else will do it for us."

"Well said, Doctor," exclaimed Lord Ardentower laughing. "Speak up for Ireland's glory—I'll back the Irishman against the Frenchman."

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Colonel Ormond, "I beg your Lordship's pardon—really had forgot absolutely that your Lordship *was* Irish; but I must beg leave to observe, my Lord (taking a pinch of snuff) that unfortunately I am not a Frenchman, only an Englishman."

"Not a Frenchman—only a Frenchified man!—So much the worse. When an ass imitates the tricks of the monkey, the said ass becomes infinitely more ridiculous and contemptible than any monkey;—and so, Colonel, I have the honour to take my leave," and with a low bow the old peer deliberately walked away.

"He! he! he!—I think, Ormond, you have got it famously," cried Mr. Trevelyan, who had been loitering within hearing. "He! he! he!—I was confoundedly afraid the old Trojan would have been at me next, so I kept clear."

"Confound him! an old crabbed—— hey! what

a devilish fine girl that is yonder, Trevelyan !—Who is she ?” cried the Colonel, absolutely getting on his legs.”

“ What girl ?” said Trevelyan, yawning.

“ There—at the top of the room, in white, talking to Count Waldemar.”

“ Why, it’s only Miss De Cardonnell. Did you never see her before ?”

“ What ! General De Cardonnell’s daughter ? I remember seeing him before I went abroad ; and I remember a little girl—but she must be very young. She’s his only child, is’ nt she ?”

“ Yes,” said Trevelyan with a yawn, “ the rest of them died.”

“ Did they indeed ! The General has a fine fortune. Really she is an elegant creature ! How gracefully she dances ! You know her Trevelyan—introduce me to her, will you ?”

“ *Me !*” exclaimed Trevelyan with his usual happy contempt for grammar, “ not I faith !—I would not go through such a bore upon any account.”

“ Wentworth, my dear fellow,” said the Colonel to Percival Wentworth, who now came up, “ do introduce me to that charming creature your cousin.”

“ Yes ; but will you dance ?”

“ I dance ! What dance this barbarous English country dance ? Excuse me, absolutely I cannot.”

“ Trevelyan, will you ?”

“ No, hang it, not I ! dancing’s such a horrid bore.”

“ There is a young lady in want of a partner——”

“Then she may want one for me,” said Trevelyan, with a rude laugh.

“Miss De Cardonnell is an elegant creature, certainly,” said Colonel Ormond, “but really to undergo the insufferable fatigue of one of these deranging dances would be too much, even for her; it would be harassing in the last degree. I should certainly expire. No, positively, I cannot go through it;” said the Colonel, affectedly stretching himself upon the couch.

“Don’t distress yourself, Colonel Ormond, I beg,” said Percival Wentworth. “It is not Miss De Cardonnell who is in want of a partner, I assure you. She has refused half a dozen men, myself included. She is going to dance with Beauchamp.”

“No!—is she though?” cried the Colonel, actually getting upon his legs. “My dear fellow, do introduce me to her; come, do! Positively I must dance the next dance with her.”

“No, ‘you’ll expire,’ you know;” said Percival, exactly mimicking his tone and manner; “‘the insufferable fatigue of these barbarous English country dances will be deranging to the last degree.’”

Mrs. Wentworth now came up, and with the irresistible despotism of a woman of the world, compelled the reluctant Colonel Ormond to go and dance with Lady Harriet St. Leger.

“He goes ‘creeping like snail, unwillingly to school,” said Lord Borodale, smiling. “What an enviable lot is my sister’s!”

“ *My* sister’s you mean, I suppose ? ” said Percival, archly glancing at Louisa, who was hanging on his arm.

During the dance Colonel Ormond came up to Captain Wentworth, with the renewed request that he would introduce him to his cousin.

“ Miss De Cardonnell,” said Percival, “ give me leave to present to you Colonel Ormond,—a gentleman whose brilliant services to his country are only surpassed by the hardships of his long years of captivity in a foreign land, and who is now anxious to add to his manifold sufferings, that of encountering, for your sake, ‘ the insufferable fatigue of these deranging barbarous English country dances.’ ”

Emily, irresistibly inclined to laugh, declared she would not be the means of imposing such a penance upon Colonel Ormond.

“ Belle Anglaise ! ” exclaimed the Colonel. “ Do not credit that barbarous wretch. For you I could undergo any thing. With you even penance would become pleasure. I shall anticipate the honour of your hand for the next dance.”

No ; Emily was engaged ; and also for the following dance, for which he repeated his request.

Colonel Ormond pathetically lamented his ill fortune in the most hyperbolical terms, but said he should claim the honour of her hand for the first disengaged dance. She however avoided making him

any promise, saying she believed she was already engaged for more dances than she should dance.

“Barbarous Beauty!” exclaimed the Colonel with a killing smile. “You would reduce me to despair. But I know you will relent.” And with a languishing look he withdrew.

“What a coxcomb!” exclaimed Emily. “How could you Percival be so mischievous as to make him ask me to dance? He seems to think he is conferring an honour upon me.”

“He thinks he is doing you the highest honour,” said Percival, as the dance separated them.

Emily danced the next dance with Count Waldemar. Supper succeeded to it; and after supper, while some of the party were walking about in the cool illuminated conservatory, Louisa, who was walking with her last partner, Lord Borodale, proposed a waltz to Emily and to her friend Lady Harriet St. Leger.

Lady Harriet said, she really durst not waltz. People would think it so strange.

“Delightful!” said Colonel Ormond. “It will be charming to make the natives stare, and astonish their weak minds. Your Ladyship will waltz with me, Miss Wentworth with Lord Borodale, and Miss De Cardonnell with Count Waldemar.”

But Miss De Cardonnell declined waltzing. Count Waldemar knew that she waltzed beautifully; for it happened that a day or two before, coming up stairs

very soon after dinner, according to the foreign custom, to which he always adhered, he had found the four young ladies, viz.—the two Miss Wentworths, Emily, and Harriet Dormer, waltzing together to the music of the piano-forte ; and, unobserved, had watched them through the open door of the outer drawing room. Although Louisa Wentworth waltzed extremely well, Emily waltzed incomparably better. But she never had waltzed with any gentleman, and on this occasion would not, on any account, have exhibited herself as a spectacle for the whole ball-room to stare at.

Count Waldemar, though he longed to waltz with her, admired her delicacy too much to urge her ; and indeed saw that it would be in vain.

Lord Borodale, when called upon, lamented his inability to waltz.

“ Not waltz !—impossible, my Lord !” said Colonel Ormond. “ You who have been abroad !”

“ It is quite true, however,” said Lord Borodale, coolly.

“ O try, brother !” said Lady Harriet. “ I am sure you can if you would try.”

“ Excuse me, Harriet, I had rather not make my first debût before so many spectators. Grown gentlemen, you know, are always taught to dance in private. But do you really mean to waltz, yourself, Harriet ?”

“ O true ! I had quite forgot !—My father would

be excessively displeased. I dare not waltz. He will not allow me to waltz, except at home with Alicia."

"How provoking!" said Louisa, looking excessively vexed. "You know I cannot waltz alone. But look, Lord Ardentower is leaving the room,—I dare say he is going to bed. So you may safely waltz, Lady Harriet, for he will know nothing about it."

So intent was Louisa upon waltzing, that she did not perceive the look of surprise and disapprobation with which Lord Borodale regarded her. She used every entreaty, both with Lady Alicia and Lady Harriet, to waltz; but finding that, on account of the dread of their father's displeasure, they persisted in refusing, she again assailed Emily, who could not plead any parental prohibition in excuse, with urgent entreaties to waltz, in which Colonel Ormond joined, with an animation, which nothing could have inspired in him, but the hopes of shining himself, and also of outshining Count Waldemar, whom he cordially hated. But Emily firmly, though with perfect equanimity and sweetness, refused.

Politeness, when it has not its seat in the mind, is apt, when the real passions are roused, to desert those who only practise its forms. Thus it was with Miss Wentworth. Thrown off her guard by anger and disappointment, she accused Emily of being ill natured and disobliging, and every thing that was unamiable; and at last, in reply to her cousin's lively and ingeni-

ous defence of her own refusal, she pettishly exclaimed, "Such affectation!"

Lord Borodale gazed with astonishment at the passions which now darkened her brow and altered her face. "Can that be the countenance," he mentally exclaimed, "that was so lately dressed in smiles, and beaming with beauty, sweetness, and animation?—Heavens! what a transformation!"

"Count Waldemar," cried Louisa in an ill-natured tone, "why don't you ask Miss De Cardonnell to waltz? You could persuade her, though no one else can."

Count Waldemar, without looking at Emily, whose face at this speech was covered with blushes, coldly said, "That he had already asked in vain, and that he had not the presumption to hope to overcome resolutions so well founded as those of Miss De Cardonnell's." Turning away, he began to converse with Lord Borodale, in order not to increase Miss De Cardonnell's embarrassment.

Colonel Ormond, however, would not so easily let slip an opportunity of exhibiting himself. It was unaccountable to him how his powers of persuasion had failed with Miss De Cardonnell; but he now directed them to Louisa, whom he soon persuaded to waltz with him alone, as the same secret motives of vanity which prompted his earnestness, were at work in her mind. And they waltzed together, amidst the gaze of a ring of encircling spectators, followed by the open

applause of many, but the secret censure or suppressed derision of more.

When the waltz was done, many of the gentlemen crowded round Louisa, vying with each other in expressing admiration of her waltzing, which was unquestionably beautiful. But the compliments they paid her, extravagant as they were, did not satisfy her; for there was one person who looked, and uttered no applause. In vain were her eyes turned towards Lord Borodale:—he stood aloof, silent and thoughtful; and when the dancing was resumed, she had the mortification of hearing him ask Miss De Cardonnell to dance, with a respectful earnestness which particularly piqued her; for of Emily she was jealous and envious.

In vain she tried every art to allure back her captive; in vain she smiled, and talked, and looked, and danced, and flirted;—"upon the impassive ice the lightnings played,"—and Louisa found, to her surprise, that innocuous were now the lightnings of her eyes,—they had dazzled, but they had not blinded him.

The disposition to deceive, the want of temper and delicacy, the love of display, and the inordinate vanity she had shewn, had disgusted Lord Borodale, and quenched the fresh-kindled spark of admiration, which might, had it found fuel, have increased to a flame.

Lord Ardentower, who had been a silent, though not an unobservant spectator of this scene, saw that his son's "eyes were now opened;" but he judiciously

refrained from any triumphant remark that might make the pride of man wilfully close them again.

Quadrilles were of such very recent introduction *, that very few ladies, and still fewer gentlemen, could dance them at all. A few of each set, however, had been found sufficiently versed in these mysteries to accomplish this feat; and therefore several quadrilles had been danced in the course of the evening.

Another was now forming, and Count Waldemar came forward to claim the hand of Miss De Cardonnell, which her partner in the last country dance, Lord Borodale, yielded reluctantly, but unhesitatingly, to the Count's alleged prior claim.

But before the dance was arranged, Colonel Ormond came up and claimed Miss De Cardonnell's hand, reminding her that he had engaged her before supper to dance. Without waiting for her reply, he hurried on to the musicians to give them some instructions about playing, assuring her he would return immediately.

"You will not desert me, I trust, Miss De Cardonnell, for this interloper?" said Count Waldemar.

"But how can I help it? I suppose I must dance with him."

"You must, if you please—if you prefer it; but surely you are engaged to me for every quadrille! Have I not a prescriptive right to hope for it? Have you not danced quadrilles with me every night? Did

* In 1806. A quarter of a century ago.

you not promise to dance another quadrille with me to-night?" .

" But if this disagreeable Colonel Ormond chooses to fancy that I am engaged to him——"

" May I ask, did you promise to dance *this* quadrille with him?"

" Certainly not."

" Then, you did not engage yourself to him?"

" No ;—but——"

She was interrupted by Colonel Ormond, who impatiently claimed her hand. She coloured crimson, and hesitated.

" Miss De Cardonnell is engaged to me," said Count Waldemar.

" Impossible, sir !" exclaimed Colonel Ormond, firing up.

" I am very sorry there should have been any mistake," said Emily. " I certainly did not consider myself engaged to you."

" But you were !" exclaimed Colonel Ormond, in an angry and offended tone ; and he pertinaciously insisted upon his right to her hand.

A warm dispute instantly arose between him and Count Waldemar, and high words passed in spite of Emily's interference, although she instantly endeavoured to terminate the quarrel by declaring she would not dance at all.

" You *shall* not dance at all, unless it be with me," muttered Colonel Ormond, as Emily drew Count Wal-

demar, upon whose arm she was leaning, towards a seat.

“ Shall not !” repeated Count Waldemar, and defiance flashed from his eye. “ He *shall* apologize to you,” he said to Emily ; and having placed her on a chair, he would have left her. But in her eagerness to prevent him from following Colonel Ormond, she laid her hand upon his arm. “ Don’t go,—pray !——” was all she could articulate ; for she was pale, and trembling, and agitated. The tone, the words, the touch of her hand, thrilled to his heart.

He instantly sat down by her, and having made her drink some iced lemonade, he used every effort to tranquillize the alarm and agitation she could not conceal, and to turn her attention from it. He was not self-sufficient enough to suppose that her distress and agitation arose from any particular solicitude for his safety ; but merely from the dread that a duel might ensue, of which she was the cause. Still this conviction raised her higher in his estimation ; for he knew many young ladies who would have been proud of the *éclat* of a duel being fought for them.

She resisted all his entreaties to dance again, because, not only had she lost all wish to dance, but she feared, that to do so with him, might renew the quarrel with Colonel Ormond. As it was, all chance of its accommodation she clearly saw rested upon Colonel Ormond’s willingness to make a satisfactory apology, without which a duel was inevitable.

Certainly, however, Count Waldemar gave her no further cause for immediate apprehension ; for he never left her side for a single moment until the ball broke up. Emily then immediately sought her mother and uncle, and communicated to them the circumstances of the quarrel, and her apprehensions of its consequences.

“ I will take care no mischief shall ensue,” said Mr. Wentworth ; “ but I dare say that Colonel Ormond, who has a great regard for his own valuable person, will make every requisite apology sooner than expose it to unnecessary danger.”

And the result proved that his judgment was right.

Count Waldemar, on leaving Emily with her mother, had instantly sought Lord Borodale, who had gone on his friend's part to Colonel Ormond with the usual message in such cases, to demand either that he should make a full and satisfactory apology for his language and conduct, in the first instance, to Miss De Cardonnell, and secondly, to himself ; or that he should name a time and place for giving him satisfaction,—which of course means, the chance either of being murdered, or a murderer.

Colonel Ormond, who had retired early to his room, on purpose to avoid any such disagreeable visit, feigned a degree of stupified intoxication, which was by no means real ; and protesting, that what between sleep and wine, his head was by no means clear enough to understand the matter, he begged leave to defer his

answer till the morning, and Lord Borodale left him to consult his pillow upon the agreeable alternative.

Now Colonel Ormond had particular reasons for not wishing to quarrel with Count Waldemar, and he had a most particular desire to avoid fighting a duel. He therefore speedily determined to make the public apology demanded, both to the Count and to Miss De Cardonnell; and with this resolution he fell asleep.

CHAPTER V.

A COXCOMB.

“ The best persuaded of himself, so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his ground of faith that all that look upon him, love him.”

SHAKSPEARE.

AMONGST the number of dissipated young Englishmen who flew to Paris at the Peace of Amiens, was Colonel Ormond; and at the recommencement of hostilities, when, by the unprecedented infraction of the law of nations, and the violation of a specific assurance of safety, the visitors of peace were perfidiously seized as the prisoners of war, he was amongst the number of détenues.

During the years of his captivity at Verdun, he contrived to make serious inroads upon his fortune, constitution, and character; and he had now returned to England, determined to repair the dilapidations of his estate by marriage. But wealth alone was not sufficient. The lady of his love must have beauty, fortune, family, and fashion. His search for this fortunate female had hitherto proved fruitless. The heiresses were ugly, and the beauties poor. But Miss De Car-

donnell seemed to unite all that he sought. He was struck with her beauty, elegance, and vivacity; and he was led, from what Trevelyan had said, to believe that she was the only child and heiress of General De Cardonnell. Percival Wentworth, whom he had also questioned upon the subject, had at once penetrated his design, and mischievously confirmed his error, giving him at the same time to understand, that she was the presumptive inheritor of her aunt, Lady Melmoth's property also; and he talked largely of an independent fortune left her by her grandmother, to accumulate until her marriage, which, in the present state of Colonel Ormond's finances, he felt would be extremely convenient to him. This fortune was really only £5000; but Percival contrived to quadruple it in the Colonel's imagination without actually specifying its amount. Golden visions of the rich dowry which a man of General De Cardonnell's wealth and liberality would give his only child upon her marriage, also floated in the Colonel's imagination; so that the result of his meditations upon his pillow was, the resolution to fall desperately in love with Miss De Cardonnell forthwith, and make her the happy and favoured object of his choice. The possibility of her rejection never once entered his head; for there was no lady in the land to whom, with his personal advantages and fashion, he did not conceive himself entitled successfully to aspire. It was, however, necessary to reconcile himself to the lady, and atone for his intemperate conduct of the preceding evening. Before any

of the rest of the party were down stairs, Count Waldemar sought an interview with him, which lasted long; and as high words were heard to pass between them, Mr. Wentworth's old confidential servant, who had been instructed to be upon the watch, instantly informed his master of this ominous circumstance. Mr. Wentworth, therefore, hurried down to them in his dressing gown; but to his surprise, though Colonel Ormond looked red with anger and vexation, and Count Waldemar's calm and lofty brow expressed unmeasured scorn, the Colonel, notwithstanding his palpable rage, was in a frame of mind so pacific, that he immediately expressed his readiness to make a public apology to Count Waldemar, and also to Miss De Cardonnell, in the terms required, for his conduct the preceding evening, which he attributed to having drunk too freely of Champagne at supper.

Lord Borodale, and several of the gentlemen of the party, (who were up early, as they were going to a county meeting at some distance,) being now down stairs, the apology to Count Waldemar was duly made in their presence, and accepted. And Colonel Ormond willingly agreed to go with Count Waldemar to make a humble apology to Miss De Cardonnell as soon as she should appear.

This he accordingly did; and she was so much delighted to be thus assured that the quarrel was appeased, and that no serious consequences were to be apprehended, that she received what he called his "amende honorable" without indeed attending to one

word he said, but with eyes beaming with pleasure ;— and she pronounced his pardon with such alacrity, that Colonel Ormond's vanity was quite intoxicated, not doubting that her joy arose from being once more upon good terms with him, and from the honour he had done her by his submission, and by the extravagant compliments he had paid her. “ How delighted she is with the smallest attention or flattery from me !” he said to himself: and undervaluing, as it is the nature of man to do, that which appears too easily attainable, he almost doubted whether he should carry his new project into execution. “ But her fortune !” that was not to be relinquished,—“ besides, she really is a fine creature,” he mentally exclaimed, as he watched her countenance and gestures. “ So much elegance, and grace, and spirit !—Yes, I'll have her, but I need not give myself any trouble about it. Any attention *from me* will do,” and he threw himself in a gracefully lounging attitude into an easy chair at the other end of the room.

Meanwhile, Count Waldemar was amusing her and himself with repeating fragments of the affected and hyperbolical compliments which Colonel Ormond had just paid her, to which he could plainly perceive that she had not paid the smallest attention. One specimen may probably suffice, which the Count declared he quoted verbatim :—“ Stung by the tortures of the mortal wound your charms inflicted, I was not myself—

I was maddened to see another wrest from me that fair hand, my promised prize !”

“ What a most superlative coxcomb !” interrupted Emily, laughing.

“ Is that your sensibility ? Have you no feeling for ‘ the mortal wound ’ you have inflicted ?”

“ For a man that has received ‘ a mortal wound,’ said Emily, “ he seems tolerably at his ease.”

“ What refinement of barbarity ! Do you add mockery to cruelty ?—First wound, and then insult your victim ? It would have been more humane to have killed him at once with a frown.”

“ But I could not,” said Emily.

“ Pardon me !—He told you that your frown would kill him ; and he afterwards feelingly said, that your smile had only reserved him for a lingering death !”

“ It will be a very lingering death indeed !” said Emily. “ The poor man’s head must be turned.”

“ Certainly, you have turned it.”

“ No : vanity has turned it long ago,” said Emily. “ Never man was so full of conceit.”

“ But it is you who have filled him thus brimful with conceit.”

“ Impossible !” said Emily, “ for how can one fill fuller a cup which is already overflowing !—I could not add one drop to the measure of his conceit.”

“ Then, since you will not allow that you have been the means of affecting his head—which I thought

might have suffered, being the weakest part—doubtless ‘the mortal wound’ you have given him is in the heart.”

“But he has no heart,” said Emily.

“I agree with you. He has certainly lost it.”

“No, no!—I mean there is no such thing in his composition as a heart. A coxcomb has no heart;—though I think I do remember something of the dissection of a beau’s heart, in that exploded book, the *Spectator*.”

“Was it not a beau’s head?”

“No: I think the beau’s head, when opened, was perfectly empty; and the heart was found with extreme difficulty, if I remember right, and its dissection was a most tedious operation; for it was so full of labyrinths and recesses, that it was scarcely possible to lay it open; but they were all hollow, and the heart itself was hard and cold like ice, and so slippery that you could not get hold of it; and at the bottom of it, in the innermost fold, beneath a great heap of flatteries, falsehoods, broken vows, and trumpery of all kinds, a little curious miniature picture of the beau himself was discovered.”

“Now, Miss De Cardonnell, if you were to dissect Colonel Ormond’s heart ——”

“Dissect Colonel Ormond! Are you teaching Emily the art of dissection, Count?” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, who came at that moment to the table to take a book.

“No; it is an art in which Miss De Cardonnell already excels. No one can *cut up* a man better.”

“You will allow she could not have a better subject to cut up,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “He seems quite ready for the operation; for if not already dead, he is dying of affectation. What an air of languor! Do you think Mr. Wentworth’s galvanic battery would re-animate him, Count?”

“I think if he can stand Miss De Cardonnell’s battery, he can stand all other batteries.”

Mrs. De Cardonnell’s attention was called off by Lord Ardentower, who addressed her on the other side.

“You are very severe upon me,” said Emily to the Count.

“Severe!” repeated Count Waldemar, with a tone and look expressive of feelings most opposite. “Severe to you! You do not—you cannot think so!”

She blushed deeply; but his eyes still pursued her downcast looks, earnestly reading their expression.

“Tell me you do not think so!” he repeated.

“I *will* not think so, then,” she said, looking up with a smile; but her eyes again sank beneath the expression of his.

They were both silent. At last he said, in a serious tone,—

“I have been thinking, Miss De Cardonnell, that if a being you despise so much as *that*”, glancing towards Colonel Ormond, “could so easily obtain your forgiveness, how readily must it be extended towards

those you esteem, if they should unhappily ever give you offence."

"If it were from one I loved and respected, I am afraid I could not so easily forgive or forget an offence; for I should feel it deeply: but an affront from *such* a being," she said, as her eye glanced upon Colonel Ormond, "whose opinion is wholly immaterial to me, would not make the smallest impression upon my mind. The difficulty would not be to forgive, but to resent it;—not to forget, but to remember it."

"Then by offending you, one might discover whether one was included in the number of the despised or the esteemed?"

"But the experiment would be very unwise," said Emily.

"And yet experiment is the only test of truth."

"But surely experiments upon the affections of our friends would be both foolish and dangerous."

"Dangerous, indeed! For such experiments might lead to a discovery of truths that neither experimental philosophy, nor any other philosophy, could teach one philosophy enough to bear."

"I am sorry to interrupt your discourse on philosophy, Count," said Lord Ardentower, "but I beseech you both to admire those two figures," pointing out Colonel Ormond and Mr. Trevelyan. "The one fancying he looks an Adonis; the other really looking like a bear; and both looking like Sloth, personified."

“ They look like two figures in the Castle of Indolence,” said Count Waldemar :—

“ ‘ Their only labour is to kill the time,
And labour dire it is, and weary woe.
They sit,—they lounge,—turn o’er some idle rhyme,—
Then rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth with loitering step and slow,’ ”—

he repeated, as Colonel Ormond rose listlessly from the sofa, and glancing at himself in a mirror as he passed, sauntered up to Miss De Cardonnell, and asked her to play bagatelle, “ *pour passer le tems.*”

“ I cannot play bagatelle,” said Emily.

“ And she can ‘ *passer le tems,*’ ” said Lord Ardentower. “ Is not that wonderful, to you who cannot ‘ *passer le tems,*’—and who can do nothing else but play bagatelle,—or, in plain English, the fool?” he added, half aside.

Colonel Ormond, looking frightened, walked away with unusual alacrity, without venturing a reply.

“ Pray, Mr. Trevelyan, is there any news?” said Lord Ardentower.

“ Don’t know, really, my Lord,” said Trevelyan, gaping.

“ You don’t know, Mr. Trevelyan! Why you have been puzzling over that paper these two hours.”

“ Eugh !” cried Trevelyan, getting up, and stretching himself with violence proportioned to his long state of inaction. “ Hang me if I know what ’s in it, though.” Then taking a long yawn, as he looked out

of the window, "We shall never get out to-day that's certain. It's raining like the devil, still. Ormond, what shall we do? Hang me if I know what to do with myself."

"Hang yourself! Why, that is the best thing you can do with yourself, Mr. Trevelyan," said Lord Ardentower; "for besides furnishing you with present employment, it will save you a great deal of future trouble how to dispose of yourself. And in you, suicide will be no crime. It will not rob society of any thing valuable."

"I'll go to the stable," said Trevelyan hastily, affecting not to hear, and striding down the room with unusual vigour.

"Poor Trevelyan seems ennuyé à la mort," said Colonel Ormond, who himself looked the picture of ennui. "For my part, when I feel in the least ennuyé, I always wish myself in France,—dear delightful France!"

"I beg leave to second that wish, Colonel. I wish you were there with all my heart," said Lord Ardentower.

"I am glad of it, my Lord," said Colonel Ormond, not understanding him; "glad your Lordship thinks with me. France, indeed, is the only country in the world. There is no other in which one really lives. Here one only vegetates. This country is really sadly behind hand;—quite Gothic! And then there is so

little communication with France now, owing to this vile war, that there is no hope of French refinements making their way here."

"No hope, but sufficient fear that they will," said Lord Ardentower. "We have plenty of fools ready to bring them, who go abroad to import foreign follies in addition to their native stock."

"And if not complete fools when they set out on their travels, they are sure to return such," said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

"The only difference is," added Lord Ardentower, "that they go over from this country with empty heads and full pockets, and come back with empty pockets and heads full of French follies and vices. I wonder, as Mirabel says in the play, 'there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.'"

"Rather give a bounty upon their exportation, and prohibit their re-importation," said Mrs. De Cardonnell. "I am sure we are overstocked with the commodity at home."

"Ah! if they would but remain in their 'dear delightful France,' these raw youths,

' ——— whom tender mothers wean,
To send abroad to see, and to be seen!' "——

"Raw youths!" repeated Colonel Ormond, swelling with rage. "Your Lordship surely cannot mean by

that any allusion to me, for certainly I have not been in leading-strings"—

“ For these last six and thirty years, at least,” interrupted Lord Ardentower; “ but no matter for that; as Fainwood says, ‘ ’Tis for the honour of England that all Europe should know that we have blockheads of all ages.’ ”

The involuntary burst of laughter which followed this speech, enraged Colonel Ormond to the highest pitch. But before he could collect his scattered senses for a reply, Elizabeth good-naturedly, in order to turn the conversation, repeated a few Latin words, which she seemed to be reading aloud from a book she held in her hand, observing, “ One cannot even take up a book of tales, in this learned age, without stumbling upon Latin or Greek. Pray explain to me the meaning of this little quotation, Colonel Ormond.”

“ I !” ejaculated the Colonel, looking electrified. “ Really, Latin is such a bore, that I am not all au fait at it now. Of all things, I detest any thing in the least pedantic. It is particularly bad taste. And indeed I have taken all possible pains to forget all I ever knew.”

“ And I am sure in that you have perfectly succeeded,” said Lord Ardentower.

“ Indeed !” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, “ that is a pity. Now, especially, when nothing but learning, and literature, and talent, obtain success in society, and when every day they are rapidly becoming more and

more indispensable to every man of refinement. Ignorance is quite out of date here, whatever it may be in France. I would really, Colonel Ormond, advise you to recommence your studies; go back to college."

"To school! to school! Old as you are, go put yourself to school!" exclaimed Lord Ardentower.

"Really," said Colonel Ormond, angrily. "I don't apprehend that living in a stupid old college, amongst Goths and Vandals, and poring over musty books, is the way to acquire that sort of elegance and air which"—surveying himself—"which, in short, nothing but the polish of travel, and Paris especially, can give."

"So then," said Lord Ardentower, "you really do plume yourself upon being one of

'The travell'd tribe, the macaroni train,
Of French friseurs and follies idly vain,
Who take a trip to Paris once a year,
To dress and look like awkward Frenchmen here.'"

"Awkward Frenchmen!" exclaimed Colonel Ormond angrily, and surveying himself all over. "Awkward Frenchmen indeed!—At least, my Lord, *that* term cannot apply to me. And really so few now can have the advantage of a residence abroad, that it is quite uncommon to see a finished gentleman."—And the Colonel again surveyed himself with delighted complacency.

“ A finished gentleman !” exclaimed Lord Ardentower, laughing, “ A finished goose !—Did you ever hear the old song, my dear Colonel ?

‘ In Johnny Bull when bound for France,
A gosling we discover ;
But taught to prate, to sing, and dance,
A *finished goose* comes over.’ ”

“ What do you mean by that, my Lord ?” said Colonel Ormond, reddening.

“ Just what I say—a finished goose ! They are not (I am sorry to say) *rare æ aves*, whatever *finished gentlemen* may be. You may possibly have met with such a creature upon two legs in your travels,—at least, all your acquaintance must have had the opportunity of seeing a specimen——”

“ Really, my Lord, this sort of language is very extraordinary. I—I—really don’t understand it.”

“ Don’t you, Colonel ? Can’t help your want of understanding, though quite aware of it. It is a natural weakness.”

“ I must say,” exclaimed the Colonel, fuming with vexation at the general laugh, “ I can’t see the wit of it.”

“ I believe it,” said Lord Ardentower, “ for it requires some portion of wit in one’s self, to see and understand wit in others ; your want of perception of it, therefore, is easily accounted for.”

“ As for that matter,” said the Colonel, sullenly,

“perhaps I may have as much wit as other people, only I don’t take so much pains to display it.”

“No—of that fault you must be acquitted!” said Lord Ardentower; and addressing Mrs. De Cardonnell, he continued, “We must allow that Colonel Ormond never in his life was known to display his wit upon any occasion whatsoever. Like the man in *Hudibras*

‘It must be own’d, if he has wit,
He’s very shy of using it,
As being loth to wear it out;
And therefore bears it not about,
Except on holidays, or so,
As men their best apparel do.’”

“Past all bearing!” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, enraged at the repeated peals of laughter which assailed his ears, and stalking about the room, until at last he stalked out, pursued to the last by Lord Ardentower’s cutting sarcasms.

“You have no mercy upon that poor silly man, my Lord,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“No!—no mercy whatever!” said Lord Ardentower, “for he deserves none. Not because he is silly, but because he is conceited, selfish, mean, contemptible, unprincipled, and wicked. Count Waldemar knows him well, and knows that all the epithets I have applied to him, severe as they may seem, are lenient, compared with what he deserves.”

Count Waldemar, who had been talking earnestly

to Miss De Cardonnell in a low voice, only smiled and said, "He is not worth wasting a thought upon; and utterly beneath your Lordship's virtuous indignation. But, my Lord, pray explain,—for really the censure was somewhat sweeping, as well as caustic,—did your Lordship really mean that all who went abroad were fools, or at least necessarily returned such?"

"No," said Lord Ardentower, laughing, "I am not such a fool myself as to think so. The advantages of travelling are great to those who have minds to profit by them. A wise man will return wiser,—a silly man a greater fool. To put what he calls 'the polish of travel' upon such a blockhead as that, is like sticking a plaster of Paris cornice upon bare walls. It only serves to make its nakedness more apparent."

"So then your Lordship thinks, like Dr. Johnson, who quotes the Spanish proverb—'He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry out with him the wealth of the Indies.' So it is in travelling, a man must carry knowledge with him, if he would bring knowledge home."

The entrance of a party, talking and laughing, from the billiard-room, put an end to this conversation.

The gentlemen surrounded Emily and Elizabeth, and challenged them and Count Waldemar to play at billiards, bagatelle, la grace, the devil*, or even battledore and shuttlecock; but Count Waldemar suddenly remembered that he had a long ride to take

* A game so called, then fashionable.

before dinner ; and looking at his watch, discovered he was already too late.

“ Why you must be mad, Count,” said Percival, “ to go out riding such a day as this ! The rain is pouring down in torrents.”

Count Waldemar did not mind rain. He had an appointment, and must go.

“ An appointment !” said Percival. “ It must be with the clouds then ; for assuredly nothing else will come out to meet you to-day.”

But, regardless of remonstrance, Count Waldemar ordered out his horse, and set off alone at full gallop.

“ The man is mad—quite mad !” exclaimed Percival, looking down the park after him ; and having come to this satisfactory conclusion, he was turning again from the window to play billiards, as if life and death depended upon it ;—but Louisa arrested his attention by saying, “ Count Waldemar is very sly, but I think I have a pretty good notion *who** his appointment is with this morning.”

“ Indeed !—Are you in his secrets then, Louisa ?”

“ O no—indeed not I !” said Louisa, disdainfully tossing her head ; “ but Pry, my maid, told me that yesterday morning, a very pretty girl, a foreigner, with a child of about three years old, came here and sent a

* Truth compels us to record the lamentable fact, that young ladies, and even gentlemen, do, in spite of the “ march of intellect ” and of “ the schoolmaster being abroad,” sometimes speak bad grammar, even in the nineteenth century.

note in to the Count ; and Pry watched him go into the steward's room to speak to her, and he seemed quite flurried, Pry said, and they were shut up a long time together ; and she heard the poor girl cry bitterly ; and the Count was talking once as if he was very angry—only Pry could not tell what they said, because they spoke nothing but French."

" And what business had Pry with what they said ? And how could she know all this ?—She must have been listening ? "

" O she meant no harm by it."

" And so then she *was* actually listening at the door to overhear Count Waldemar's conversation with this person yesterday ? "

" I suppose she was."

" And I suppose you turned her off to-day ? "

" Indeed, I did no such thing. I cannot possibly do without Pry : she suits me exactly. After all, it was very natural she should be curious to know what the girl wanted with the Count."

" Who could it be ? " said Percival, musing.

" Some poor destitute foreigner, asking charity, I dare say," said Emily.

" That is charity in you, however, to think so, Emily," said Percival.

" O indeed it was not," said Louisa ; " Pry says the girl said, in her broken English, that she had known the Count very well when he was abroad. And Pry heard him call her by her name the moment he entered

the room. Pry cannot remember the name ; but she says it sounded like *Bawl on !*”

“ It is very strange !” Percival said, and Emily thought.

It was a very late hour before Count Waldemar returned ; so late, indeed, that he would not have been in time for dinner, had not the gentlemen from the county meeting been as late as himself. Bitterly did they complain of the dull, heavy, long tedious speeches they had undergone.

“ I don’t doubt it,” said Lord Ardentower. “ What our country orators want in *depth*, they give you in *length*. By the by that is what Montesquieu said of the French—

‘ Ce qui manque aux orateurs en profondeur,
Ils vous le donnent en longueur.’ ”

“ One man actually spoke an hour and ten minutes, and all about nothing,” said Lord Borodale.

“ And another, who aimed at being facetious,” said Mr. Wentworth, “ told us a story, that as the French say, ‘ Would make a man fall asleep upon his legs.’ ”

“ These gentlemen,” said Count Waldemar, “ seem to have belonged to that numerous class of speakers, ‘ qui parlent beaucoup et disent peu de choses.’ ”

CHAPTER VI.

KESWICK.

“ With his own form, acquaint the forward fool,
Shewn in the faithful glass of ridicule.”

JOHNSON.

THE next day the visitors at Esthwaite Court dispersed. The younger part of Mrs. Wentworth's family set off with Mrs. and Miss De Cardonnell, to pay their customary annual visit to Mr. Rolleston, an uncle of Mr. Wentworth's and of Mrs. De Cardonnell's, who lived upon the lake of Keswick. They were accompanied by Mr. Dormer and his sister Harriet, and by Count Waldemar. Mr. Wentworth, who in truth preferred his own library to every other spot in the world, was too much engaged with county business, in his capacity of member of parliament, to be able or willing to leave home at this time; and Mrs. Wentworth would not leave him.

The carriages were at the door, and the party preparing to set off, when Colonel Ormond came up to Miss De Cardonnell, and informed her he should do himself the happiness of visiting Keswick during her

stay there. She could not repress a smile at the self-sufficiency of his manner, and the importance he seemed to expect her to affix to this interesting piece of intelligence,—a smile which Colonel Ormond attributed to her delight at the prospect of seeing him again so soon. She carelessly said that she concluded he had never seen the beauties of Keswick.

“There is only *one* beauty that could attract me to Keswick,” he replied.

“Only one !” she replied with unfeigned surprise. “And pray, amongst the many beauties of Keswick, what may that one beauty be ?”

“Can you ask ?” he replied with an insinuating smile. “When Miss De Cardonnell is there, what other beauty can possess any attraction ?—What beauty can it possess so great ?”

Emily, struck with her usual quick perception of the ridiculous, instantly replied with mock gravity, “Yes, when Colonel Ormond is there, it will possess one beauty greater still, as even he himself must admit.”

“Perhaps indeed he himself might,” said Count Waldemar laughing.

But the Colonel did not heed him. No flattery, even when ironical, was too gross for him to swallow ; and, intoxicated with what he conceived to be the highest possible compliment from Miss De Cardonnell, he exclaimed, with a profound bow, “O Miss De Cardonnell ! you are too flattering ! The whole world contains no beauty greater than yourself.”

“What is it that amuses you and Count Waldemar so immoderately, Emily?” said Percival Wentworth, coming up to them.

“Only that Colonel Ormond says that I am greater than Skiddaw or Helvellyn.”

“Greater than Skiddaw!”

“A greater beauty than Skiddaw or Helvellyn, or all the great beauties of Keswick and of the world.”

“Except himself,” said Count Waldemar. “Miss De Cardonnell is certain that Colonel Ormond himself will acknowledge that fact.”

“Undoubtedly he would,” said Emily,—“for if I—even I—such a little creature, can eclipse all the beauties of Keswick in his eyes—when he himself is there,—well may the rocks and mountains hide their diminished heads!”

So saying, Count Waldemar hurried her into the carriage, which drove off, leaving Colonel Ormond standing on the steps, looking perplexed with the doubt whether she meant to compliment or to laugh at him. “She assumes the air of playful badinage,” at last he concluded, “but that is only a veil. She is evidently captivated with me.” And self-satisfied, Colonel Ormond reposed on this belief.

Self-satisfied too, though in a different sense, were the party who left him. The day was fine, the scenery beautiful—the ride altogether delightful; but though these were the ostensible subjects of their praise and pleasure, perhaps their real satisfaction

arose from the happy arrangement of the party, which they never mentioned at all. Mr. Dormer drove Miss Wentworth in his curricie ; Percival Wentworth drove Harriet Dormer ; and Count Waldemar, who resigned his carriage to the ladies' maids, escorted Mrs. and Miss De Cardonnell, and Elizabeth Wentworth, in their barouche.

We spare the reader the description of the lakes, woods, vales, mountains, valleys, and waterfalls, which they passed ; the beautiful cascades of Ambleside and Rydal Hall—the romantic lakes of Grassmere and Thirlmere, the picturesque and sequestered vale of St. John, with its castellated rocks,—and the dark and frowning majesty of Helvellyn and Saddle Back. We even resist the temptation of describing the view of the lake of Keswick, from the hill above, and of comparing it, for the hundredth time, to Beauty reposing on the lap of Horror,—although this said prospect not only turned the head of the poet Gray, but nearly turned his body also ; for, by his own account, he could hardly abstain from going down the hill again to Keswick, when he viewed it from the summit for the last time. Greater men than he have gone up the hill and then come down again !

After a delightful journey, the travellers reached Hollywood, the seat of Mr. Rolleston, to dinner.

Mr. Rolleston, after amassing a splendid fortune in India, had returned home to enjoy it at the usual period for that measure ; viz. when the time for enjoy-

ment is passed;—when broken health and declining years forbid to taste the pleasures which wealth might have yielded, and entail sufferings which it cannot cure.

From Keswick he had gone, and therefore to Keswick he chose to return, though he execrated its damp and dripping climate. There he purchased a noble domain, and built a very large and supremely hideous house, with all the magnificence and bad taste of a nabob, and a *nouveau riche*. After his house was finished, during a fit of the gout, he discovered that he wanted a wife, and he soon met with a lady who discovered that she wanted a husband. She was still young and pretty,—he was old and ugly. She was poor,—he was rich. She talked much, and had a shrill voice, which he could hear,—he was silent, and as deaf as a post. He admired her charms, (especially the shrill voice,) she his fortune. They were married, and proved to be as completely opposite in inclination as in every thing else. She liked company, amusement, dashing, fashion, and London; he liked ease, quiet, comfort, what she called stupid society, and home, or rather its luxuries.

His game, his venison, his seven years' old mutton, his pineries, vineries, peacheries, conservatories, and ice-houses; his riding-house, in which he could ride in all weathers; his baths; his stoves, and flues, which regulated the temperature of his whole mansion, to the uniform genial heat best suited to an Indian constitu-

tion, nay, even his luxurious beds and easy chairs,—no where could the loss of all these appliances be supplied; and therefore was Mr. Rolleston a most domestic man, therefore was he fondly attached to his home.

Self-willed, like all who have been long habituated to the exercise of uncontrolled authority, and selfish, like all who through life have had their own inclination and enjoyment only to consult, he took his own way with a steady immoveable determination that could not be shaken, leaving his wife to follow hers, whenever it did not cross his own habits and comfort. Yet in his way he was extremely indulgent. He chose to stay at home himself, and to make her stay at home with him; but she might have as much company, live in as much style, and spend as much money as she chose. But alas! how was it possible to spend money at Keswick?—Where could she find company in these solitudes? And what was the use of dashing, amidst rocks, and mountains, and rustics? Yet it would have been as easy to have moved the rocks and mountains themselves from their eternal foundations, as to have made Mr. Rolleston leave Keswick, or let her leave it, unless when a fortunate fit of the gout, or a serious bilious attack, drove him to Bath or Cheltenham.

The party from Esthwaite Court were received with peculiar satisfaction by Mr. and Mrs. Rolleston, who had spent the preceding day alone—a misfortune

which the lady took care should happen as rarely as possible ; but which, in this distant corner of the world, the utmost exertions could not at all times avert. Mr. Rolleston was always glad to see company in the house ; it amused his wife, it made up his whist table, and looked lively. So long as his visitors did not interfere with his ways and comforts, they might say or do whatever they pleased ; and so perfect was the freedom which reigned, that his house was known in the country by the name of **LIBERTY HALL.**

The most striking feature of Mr. Rolleston's character was his passion for politics, his bigotted belief in the Ultra Tory creed, and his insatiate perusal of newspapers and pamphlets on "the right side." The king he thought perfect, the constitution perfect, the government perfect, and all the powers that be—perfect. Mr. Pitt was a heaven-born minister—his successors heaven-descended ministers. He always carried a speaking trumpet, and excepting through this tube no wall was ever more impenetrably deaf ; so that he seldom heard his favourite opinions controverted : for few that knew him were hardy enough to bawl an opposite sentiment into his ear. He thought an atheist a less hateful person than a democrat, (in which appellation he included all the Whigs,) and would sooner have pardoned a doubt of the wisdom of Providence than of the wisdom of ministers. He looked upon every man who did not support the

power of the crown, the measures of government, and "the rights of church and state by law established," as an enemy to his country; and firmly believed, that whoever proposed any measure of reform, however moderate or necessary, had its ruin secretly at heart.

The morning after their arrival proved bright and beautiful. It was spent in rambling, and sailing, and exploring all the celebrated objects and points of view round the lake. They visited the dark passes of Borrowdale, gazed at the wonders of the Boulder Stone, climbed to the summit of the Eagle's Crag, and stood below the thundering falls of Lodore.

They contemplated the perpendicular fissure in the mountain side, where Lord Derwentwater, when he effected his escape in 1715, is said to have run up, and which a rain torrent has since taken the liberty to run down;—a path indeed better suited to the torrent than to any other description of passenger; and certainly not assailable by any of the lords of these degenerate days.

In returning, as their boat neared the shore, they descried two gentlemen throwing stones into the water with extraordinary perseverance, and such interest that they seemed to "lend their little souls at every stroke." These proved to be Mr. Trevelyan and Colonel Ormond.

"Now Wentworth," said Trevelyan, after the usual salutations had passed and the party had landed,

“you shall be the judge:—I’ve won my wager over and over again of Ormond, and he won’t allow it. We bet which stone should go furthest, and mine did—every time too! By Jove, it’s too bad! But you shall be the judge, now.”

“No—the ladies shall be the judges,” said Colonel Ormond.

“But pray, gentlemen,” asked Mrs. De Cardonnell, “what is it you are about?”

“Making ducks and drakes,” said Trevelyan; “we used to do it at school.”

“Did you indeed!” said Mrs. De Cardonnell; “Then I have done you injustice, for I really thought you had never learnt any thing at school.—And pray how long have you been practising this interesting occupation?”

“We have been here about an hour,” said Trevelyan, rather sulkily.

“Which would have appeared an age,” added the Colonel, “but for seeing you on the lake.”

“But for making ducks and drakes, you mean,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“Curious!—to see two geese make ducks and drakes,” said Percival to Elizabeth, in an under tone.

“Come, come, Ormond! don’t stand wasting all our time here,” cried Trevelyan,—“Now for it!”

“Colonel Ormond,” repeated Mrs. De Cardonnell in a tone of grave reproach to the Colonel, who was

making soft speeches to Emily, "Mr. Trevelyan complains that you are wasting his valuable time. How can you answer it to your conscience?"

"Come, Ormond,—here goes! Now we'll see who beats,—the best of three, mind."

The party now all turned back to witness this redoubtable contest, which was decided in favour of Colonel Ormond, to the extreme vexation and disappointment of Trevelyan.

"Come Ormond, double or quits," said Trevelyan.

"Done," said Colonel Ormond, and again they tried, and again victory was unanimously adjudged to Colonel Ormond.

"The devil's in it!" exclaimed Trevelyan in a rage—"I'll bet you ten guineas that I beat you this time."

"Well!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell, walking away, "I have heard of people making ducks and drakes of their money, but I never saw it before."

Colonel Ormond, however, declined the offered bet. Trevelyan, as they were going away, made what he called a devilish good duck and drake.—"Famous! is it not?" he exclaimed. "Only look!—there it goes half over the lake. What the devil! Whose was that?" cried he, as a stone passing his flew skimming along the surface of the water as far as the eye could reach. Turning round, he beheld on the steep bank behind him, a little ragged urchin standing grinning.

"It was me, maister," cried the lad.

"You impudent jackanapes," said Trevelyan in a rage. "Do you pretend to make game of your betters?"

"Na: I only make ducks and drakes, sur," said the boy, still grinning.

"I'll teach you to make ducks and drakes, you little rascal."

"You'd better let me teach you, maister," said the malicious rogue, with a still broader grin; while a general laugh from the whole party so enraged Trevelyan, that shaking the horsewhip he held in his hand, he sprung up the steep bank with hasty strides, threatening to chastise the lad's insolence, and not to leave a whole bone in his body.

Count Waldemar and Percival Wentworth, with one impulse, sprang forward to his rescue, but the lad wanted no champions. He stood quite still, grinning more than ever, till Trevelyan was on the point of gaining the top of the steep bank; then suddenly giving him a violent push, down tumbled the luckless Trevelyan, and rolled to the bottom amongst the mud and slime, while the delighted urchin scampered off, laughing loudly and insultingly at the prostrate gemm'en.

Half suffocated with mud and ire, and incensed beyond endurance by his fall, his disgrace, his dirty plight, and the laughter which assailed his ears, Trevelyan, as soon as he got upon his legs, vented

his impotent rage in empty curses and threats against the light-footed and light-hearted boy.

Mrs. Rolleston, finding these "Lakers" were acquaintances of her friends, asked them to dinner, an invitation they accepted with alacrity; for the fame of Mr. Rolleston's dinners and wine attracted Trevelyan, and "fairer game," Colonel Ormond. In the course of the evening, an expedition was proposed to Buttermere, by the romantic vale of Newlands; but as there was no carriage-road that way, some difficulty arose as to the mode of conveyance.

Mrs. Rolleston, who could not herself be of the party, as she expected company, offered them a vehicle built expressly for mountain excursions and roads, and designated by courtesy a sociable, although in structure it was little superior to a light railed cart. It was very rough, but very safe. As Mrs. De Cardonnell determined to go in it, Emily and Elizabeth Wentworth agreed to accompany her, not choosing to leave her alone, although they would have preferred riding on horseback. Louisa could not ride so far; but she disdainfully refused to go in such a jolting vehicle, declaring the fatigue was more than she could encounter: therefore she accepted Mr. Dormer's offer to drive her in his curricule, which he maintained "was as safe, or safer, than any cart." Nor could any representations dissuade Louisa from venturing in this dangerous and ill adapted carriage.

CHAPTER VII.

A PARTY OF PLEASURE.

“ ——— Methinks it were a happy life,
 To be no better than a homely swain,
 To sit upon a hill as I do now.

* * * * *

Ah ! what a life were this ? how sweet !—how lovely !
 Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade,
 To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,
 Than doth a rich embroidered canopy ?”

THIRD PART OF KING HENRY VI.
 ACT II. SCENE 5.

NEXT morning the party set off for Buttermere in high spirits, each division following the bent of their own inclinations. Harriet Dormer and Percival Wentworth, mounted upon ponies, galloped away through the valley, as if their sole object was riding a race, never once looking at the scenery they went expressly to see.

Mr. Dormer and Louisa, engrossed in deep flirtation, saw nothing but each other, as long as the road was tolerable ; and when it became intolerable, she saw only the large stones and holes, he only her terrors and agitation.

Mr. Trevelyan, who rode on alone, saw nothing

but his own favourite horse, Wildfire, and heard nothing but the edifying conversation of his groom.

The party in the sociable, escorted by Count Waldemar and Colonel Ormond on horseback, alone enjoyed the ride and the scenery.

The entrance of the valley was rural and picturesque. Neat white cottages were scattered at intervals, surrounded by cultivated fields and sheltering coppice woods, stretching far up the sides of the green hills, which were spotted with the sheep that browsed, unconfined, over their summits. A bridge thrown over the mountain stream, beside a rural mill and cottage, formed so picturesque a scene, that they stopped for a few minutes to sketch it. As they advanced, the vale narrowed, the mountains reared higher their heath covered summits, and their dark rugged sides approaching nearer and nearer, confined the pent-up and tumultuous stream. Every vestige of man and human habitation had disappeared. Their road, which had been at first upon the smooth green turf, now hung upon the steep banks, or traversed the very bed of the mountain torrent. They passed an ancient mine, which tradition reports to have produced immense quantities of gold in the days of Queen Elvira, and which, in the imagination of the Cumbrian rustics, still contains hoards of unexplored treasure. Spite of the rough jolts they sustained, the sociable party highly enjoyed the wild and singular scenery of this secluded valley.

Colonel Ormond had long been secretly tired to death with being made to admire the beauties of nature, and with riding so slow ; and above all, with finding himself completely thrown into the back ground by Count Waldemar, who was the very soul and spirit of the conversation. He therefore at last left the sociable party, saying he would ride forward after Trevelyan to Buttermere, to order dinner for them. But long and rueful were the countenances with which these two worthies greeted the ladies on their arrival at the door of the little inn at Buttermere.

“ We can get nothing to eat,” they exclaimed in doleful accents.

A laugh from the ladies had no effect in brightening their faces. Colonel Ormond groaned in secret, and Mr. Trevelyan loudly vented his vexation, by wishing the rocks and the mountains, and the lakes and the valleys, and the woods and the waterfalls, and all the beauties of nature, and even the beauty of Buttermere herself—fairly at the devil.

In vain from a neighbouring eminence which the whole party ascended, the grandeur of the scenery was pointed out to them. High perpendicular hills rising immediately from the water, and surmounted by the dark summits of still higher mountains appearing one behind another in confused masses ; Horsden Crag, starting abruptly from the head of the lake and encircling its brim with a majestic sweep, its naked inaccessible summits lost in the clouds,—formed a fine

contrast to the rural cottages and fertile fields of the peaceful hamlet at their feet; while the woody hills of the opening towards Crummock Water, catching the glowing beams of the sun, completed an enchanting picture.

To Crummock Water they walked while Mary the Beauty was cooking their dinner, which consisted of fine trouts from the lake, bacon and eggs, potatoes and greens, cheese and butter, and a couple of old hens which had undeniably fallen victims to their visit to Buttermere. Yet such was the appetite produced by their drive and walk in the pure mountain air, that when the Beauty, like "the neat-handed Phillis," brought up these '*messes*,' dressed by her own hands, the rest of the party partook of them with the utmost satisfaction, regardless of the pathetic complaints of the two malcontents.

Dinner ended, the party set off again on their return; but scarcely had they proceeded two miles before the sky overcast, the thunder, which had long been heard at a distance among the hills, burst over their head in tremendous peals, and vivid flashes of blue and forked lightning darted from the black and threatening clouds in quick succession. All nature seemed struck with silent awe. The lonely bird hastily winged its scared flight back to the shelter of its nest; the cattle stood gazing fearfully on the hills; the pipe of the shepherd boy was hushed; the labourer sought his home. Even the buzz of the

thoughtless insect was unheard. "How sublime in the silence of nature is the peal of the thunderbolt!" said Emily, "it is like the voice of God!"

A tremendous clap at this instant seemed to shake the very heavens, and a dreadful scream met their ear. It was from Louisa. Although Mr. Dormer had warned her of the danger of rendering his spirited horses wholly ungovernable, for they were already frightened partly with the storm, but still more with the starts and exclamations which escaped her at every thunder clap, she had so little self-command, that at the last crash of the elements she uttered this piercing shriek, and the terrified animals instantly set off down the steep hill in front of them with frightful impetuosity, urged on faster and faster by Louisa's wild and continued screams.

Count Waldemar, who was riding close to the sociable, which was considerably in advance of the curricie, at one glance saw the point of the most imminent peril, at the bottom of the long rugged hill which they were descending. He instantly galloped back to the spot, and stationing himself at the very edge of the fearful precipice, round which the narrow road made a sharp turn, dangerous to pass even with the utmost skill and caution, he had barely time to snatch up a long stake which lay near, and which he steadily held across the narrow road. The effect of this apparent barrier gave a momentary check to the

furious career of the horses, of which he availed himself to seize the reins, and by desperate efforts his vigorous arm succeeded in stopping them at the very moment when they must have been impelled headlong over the brink of the tremendous precipice, and been dashed to pieces, together with the terrified pair in the curricie, whose lives he thus saved at the imminent hazard of his own; for had his daring attempt failed, he must himself have been hurled over with them, and shared the same fate. Such was the shock of stopping the carriage, that both Miss Wentworth and Mr. Dormer were thrown out; but falling on the other side of the road upon a soft bed of heath, which grew upon a steep bank nearly as high as the curricie, they escaped unhurt; and although Louisa went through the ceremony of fainting, she revived at the moment the water brought in Mr. Dormer's hat was about to be thrown over her face, and was evidently as well as ever.

Count Waldemar was the only sufferer, having received a severe sprain in his arm from his exertion in stopping the horses. The curricie was broken, and Colonel Ormond and Mr. Trevelyan, who had been behind the sociable, and consequently nearer the curricie than Count Waldemar, had stood still, staring at this scene, without the smallest attempt to offer any assistance. Trevelyan was, however, now roused to bestowing his hearty en-

comiums upon Count Waldemar's exploit ; but the praise which gratified him the most, he read in Emily's eyes.

Louisa was now very glad to get into that much despised vehicle, the sociable, while Mr. Dormer mounted his servant's horse. But scarcely had they again resumed their journey before the rain came down in torrents, as if a water spout had burst upon the mountains, and in a few moments they were completely drenched.

Percival Wentworth, who had been far in advance with Harriet Dormer, but had galloped back and rejoined the rest of the party when he saw the accident, now looked round at the desolate hills with dismay. " Pray, friend," he said to the driver of the sociable, " is there no place to put our heads into ?"

" Na, Sir," said the man.

" What ! not a house, nor a cow byre, nor a shieling, nor even a piggery ?"

" Na, Sir, there 's nane till ye cum till a bit hoose a moil ayont the yett."

" A mile further !—Patience !—Then we must philosophize."

At last they reached the house, which proved to be a pretty thatched cottage they had admired in the morning. But without one thought of its picturesque beauty, they now crowded into its clean kitchen, where Harriet Dormer, Colonel Ormond, and Mr. Trevelyan, had already taken refuge. The good

woman bustled about, heaped up fresh turf upon the blazing fire, made another fire in her little parlour for the gentlemen, who immediately went to it, while the ladies pulled off their dripping garments, and attired themselves in the old woman's coarse but clean habiliments. Grotesque were the figures they presented, thus metamorphosed. Quilted stuff petticoats that stood out like a hoop—gowns with peaked waists, a yard long—tight sleeves just covering the elbow—thick woollen stockings—checked aprons—and three-cornered handkerchiefs pinned down to the waist!

The gentlemen who, mean time, had been arraying themselves in the Sunday suits of the old man and his sons, presented figures, at least, as ludicrous:—and great was the laughter which ensued when they met.

While the wet clothes were drying at one fire, they gathered round the other, in hopes the rain would abate. Vainly did Colonel Ormond and Mr. Trevelyan lament their hard fate, and execrate the weather; vainly did they wander to the cottage door every five minutes, and look out anxiously at the clouds. The rain still descended with unabated violence, though the thunder had ceased. "Why we shall be kept here all night, at this rate," said Trevelyan impatiently.

"I'm thinking you will, Sur," said the old cottager, deliberately.

“What the devil do you mean?” exclaimed Trevelyan, with staring eyes and open mouth. The old man said, that the water, called ‘Mad Newland’s Beck,’ from the rapidity with which it rushes down its bed of rocks, was already ‘waxing,’ and would come down directly, and overflow the valley so as to render the road utterly impassable for that night.

“What! stay in this confounded hole all night! I’ll be hanged if I do,” said Trevelyan.

“And you’ll be drowned if you don’t,” said Count Waldemar, laughing.

The old man’s prediction was speedily verified. The stream whose crystal waters rippled round the rocks in the morning, now came down, ‘red, roaring, wide, and deep,’ with a tremendous impetuosity, which those only who have witnessed the rapid rise and fall of mountain streams can conceive. The whole valley was covered with its raging torrent.

“Now, Trevelyan, will you go to Keswick now?” said Percival. “You will soon be there if you only set out. The water will carry you there faster even than ‘Wildfire’ himself.”

“Why we may be kept in this wretched cabin the Lord knows how long!” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, in rueful accents.

The old man consolingly assured them, that “the beck sune rins oot, and by the morn it’ waiter would be doon, and they might gang their ways!”

Emily was shocked at the rudeness of Colonel

Ormond, in repaying the hospitality of these good people by calling their home a wretched cabin, an insult which had luckily escaped the old man's deaf ear, but which she saw was felt by his wife ; and she therefore immediately began to praise the extreme cleanliness, neatness, and cheerfulness of the cottage, which she said looked like the abode of health and contentment.

“What a pastoral idea, Emily?” said Percival. “Why, you had better live in it yourself, and turn shepherdess, and tend your ‘harmless sheep on the mountain's steep,’ with a green petticoat, and a crook all trimmed with flowers ;—and Colonel Ormond shall be your shepherd, and pipe ditties the live long day.—He is very fond of piping.”

“Oh, what a shepherd you would be, Colonel Ormond !” exclaimed Harriet Dormer.

“Unworthy, however, of such a shepherdess,” said the Colonel, with a conceited air, and bowing to Miss De Cardonnell.

“I beg to decline it,” said Emily. “I should hate to be a shepherdess, and tend sheep. How tiresome it would be !”

“Why what occupation can be more harmless !” said Percival. “You might tell your sorrows to the murmuring brooks,—that is, if you had any sorrows to tell ; though, for the life of me, I cannot conceive what they could be : and then—what would be your joys !”

“What indeed ?” said Emily, laughing.

“How peaceful would be your life !”

“Much such a life as that of the sheep themselves, I imagine,” said Emily, “only without the benefit of grazing.”

“So then,” said Count Waldemar, laughing, “your idea of the happiness of rural life is not very exalted?”

“No doubt there is great and real happiness in rural life, in the life which rustics lead,—to those brought up to it;—but not brought up as we have been. We should be miserable in this cottage, and with those occupations which make these poor people so happy. But I think there is no life so happy as a country life.”

“None, certainly,” said Count Waldemar. “There is no life so happy as that of an English country gentleman.”

“What a true John Bull idea,” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, with a sneer.

“I thank you for the compliment,” said Count Waldemar, with a bow. “You could not pay me a higher one, than to call me a true Englishman.”

The applause which ensued exasperated Colonel Ormond, especially as he could find no reply.

“But do not you think, Emily,” said Percival, “that if we had been born and brought up as cottagers, we should have been happier leading their simple, natural, industrious life, than living in luxury and idleness as we do?”

“O no, no!” said Emily. “Think how many sources of pleasure, of the highest enjoyments of our nature, would have been debarred to us! And as to luxury,” she added, smiling, “we may abuse it, but we all like it. And idleness,—our busy idleness is delightful. As Cowper says

‘How various his employments whom the world
Calls idle!’”

“And yet how artificial is our existence!” said Count Waldemar; “how full of vain longings, of insatiate wants, of self-created sorrows, and self-inflicted bitterness! How full of cares, and evils, and mortifications, that the peaceful cottager never knows!”

“I think cottagers must be very happy,” said Harriet Dormer. “I am sure we might be very happy in this cottage.”

“True, very true,” cried Percival, with much gravity; “we might indeed be truly happy in a cottage. It is the only natural, the only rational mode of existence. Man was meant for nature. I’ll embrace rural life, I’m determined.”

“Now’s the time,” said Count Waldemar: “here you have every thing adapted for rural felicity;

‘The whitewash’d wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnish’d clock that clicks behind the door,
The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day,
Crack’d china tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
And pewter dishes glistening in a row.’

You can be at no loss for books, when the book of nature is spread open before you ; and none for looking-glasses, when every crystal pool will serve as a mirror. The green turf will be your carpet, enamelled with a thousand flowers ; the harmless sheep your constant companions. The lark will wake you in the morning with her matin song, and the murmur of the brook lull you to sleep at night. For music, you will have the harmony of the grove, ‘ the linnet’s lay of love ’ ;—and for dinner,

‘ A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.’ ”—

“ A scrip with fruits indeed ! ” exclaimed Mrs. De Cardonnell, with a smile. “ And where are you to get fruits, I should like to know, amongst the Cumbrian mountains ? Not so much as a crab-apple, I promise you ! No, no, your dinner must be pot-herbs ! ”

“ Pot-herbs ! ” said Percival, ruefully, as he slowly retreated back again to his three-legged stool, and sat down with his hands on his knees.—“ Pot-herbs ! It never will do to dine upon pot-herbs. I’ll give up ruralising.”

“ What, will you leave me all alone to ruralise by myself ? ” exclaimed Harriet Dormer. O false, fickle, faithless man ! Could you have the heart to leave me ? ”

“ Leave you ! no. I would take you with me, and we would return ‘ back to busy life again.’ ”

“And to your senses again,” said Mrs. Cardonnell.

“And to his three-legged stool again,” said Elizabeth. “See how deep in thought he sits !”

“I am a philosopher,” said Percival, as if in a profound study.

“And pray what sort of philosopher would *you* make ?” asked Elizabeth.

“A perfect philosopher, a practical philosopher, a contemplative philosopher, a moral philosopher, a natural philosopher, a rural philosopher, and a laughing philosopher ; in short, I am every kind of philosopher by turns—but always a philosopher.”

“What ! are you ever a *crying* philosopher ?” asked Harriet.

“No, but a crying philosopher is no philosopher at all—or else he would not cry. But I am——

“‘Every thing by turns, and nothing long,’” interrupted Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“On the contrary, always the same.”

“Yes, always equally volatile.”

“Nay, you are severe upon me, my dear aunt. I only proposed going into rural retirement, and the wisest of men have done the same. I believe it was no less a personage than Dr. Percy—who was either a grave old bishop, or ‘most venerable archdeacon’—I forget which—that composed that romantic invitation to ‘love in a cottage.’” And he sung, turning to Harriet Dormer,

“ ‘O Nanny ! wilt thou gang with me,
 Nor sigh to quit the flaunting town,
 Can silent glens have charms for thee,
 The lowly cot and russet gown ? ’ ”

“ He and you might as well have spared ‘Nanny’ the question,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “The ball-room and ball-gown would have far more charms for her, or any other girl of sixteen, than any ‘lowly cot, or russet gown’. You might as well address your fair one in that absurd exhortation which a certain poet, who was, like you, a great philosopher, has left as a record of his folly,

‘ Let us, Amanda, timely *wise*,
 Improve the passing hour that flies,
 And in sweet raptures *waste* the day,
 Among the brooks of Invermay.’ ”

“One way of being *wise*, and *improving* their time, was to *waste* the entire day, certainly,” said Count Waldemar, laughing. “Ridiculous !”

“That such stuff should ever have been published by a man of sense—and Akenside was a sensible man—is marvellous,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “But that it should be esteemed as fine poetry, and re-published as such in every successive edition of the ‘Classic British Poets,’ with quantities more of such trash, is really most extraordinary ;—when, if such stuff were to appear now for the first time, it would not even reach the taste of a common ballad-singer.”

“The prettiest verses of the kind that I remember,” said Count Waldemar, “are in an old Scotch song called, I think, ‘The braes of Balquither,’ or some such name.”

“Pray repeat them,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“I am afraid I remember very few of them,” he replied; “they seem to be a hunter’s invitation to his love.

‘Will ye go, lassie, go,
To the braes of Balquither,
Where the blaeberries grow
’Mang the bright blooming heather.

‘I will twine thee a bower,
By the clear silver fountain,
And I ’ll cover it o’er
Wi’ the flowers of the mountain.

‘I will range through the wilds,
And the deep glens sae dreary,
And return wi’ their spoils
To the bower of my deary.

‘Now the summer ’s in prime,
Wi’ the flowers richly blooming,
And the wild mountain thyme,
A’ the moorlands perfuming.

‘Will ye go, lassie, go,
To the braes of Balquither,
Where the blaeberries grow
’Mang the bright blooming heather?’”

Count Waldemar could remember no more of them. They were universally admired.

“How much more beautiful”, said Mrs. De Car-

donnell, "is the simplicity and truth of these stanzas, which seem to breathe the very language of nature, than all Pope's and Shenstone's affected pastorals!"

"Happily, pastorals are now utterly exploded, all except Percival's pastorals," said Emily.

"Well, well, I give up my pastorals; but it was all your doing, Emily. You turned our heads with your romantic picture of this cottage, and its rural pleasures, and health, and peace, and contentment, and all that sort of thing.—It was you who were for 'love in a cottage.'"

"I!—indeed I beg to be excused! I should not like 'love in a cottage' at all.—I should like love *out* of a cottage a great deal better,"—said Emily, laughing and blushing.

"Oh, Emily!" exclaimed Percival, "you little dissembler!—Now you pretend *not* to be romantic,—just as many others affect sentiment and romance."

"Nay, Percival! it is too bad to accuse me both of folly and affectation at once," exclaimed Emily, laughing.

"I accuse you of neither; only of a little romance. I know with you, it will be 'all for love, or the world well lost.' You would not give up the man you loved, to be a queen. You could not, would not, live without love."

"Certainly, I think a cottage with love preferable to a palace without—of the two alternatives. I own I should like neither. But *that* is not romance; it is wis-

dom. For although you do not like a dinner of pot-herbs, Percival, neither do I, yet, did not Solomon, the wisest of men, say, and say truly, that ‘ Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith ’ ? ”

“ Then Solomon was a great fool,” said Mr. Trevelyan. “ A dinner of herbs would be detestable, either without love or with love——”

“ For sauce,” added Percival.

“ And as for hatred,” continued Trevelyan, unheeding the laugh, “ only give me a good dinner ;— I should not hate *that*, I know, whoever it was with.”

“ O shocking ! ” exclaimed the Colonel, “ horrible ! Life is not life without love ; existence would be wretchedness. But I can fancy,” he continued, with a significant smile at Emily,—“ I can *fancy*, that with one fair being, even love in a cottage would be happiness.”

“ You would find it *fancy*, indeed,” said Emily, coldly. “ But you say nothing, Mamma, upon this subject of love in a cottage. Pray what do you think ? ”

“ Think !—that the delusion which can expect happiness in descending from habitual refinement and cultivation, to vulgar low-born cares, and to the daily endurance of toil, want, and privation, is too absurd to be seriously entertained or acted upon by any human being, not utterly deprived of his senses. Certainly at least such romantic chimeras would effectually be dissipated by a single week’s experience of ‘ the lowly

cot, and russet gown.'—Conceive a sentimental pair of lovers employed in cooking their own dinner, washing up their own dishes, and scouring their own floors ! But indeed it would all fall upon the hapless lady. She must do all the dirty work ! Think of the Amanda or Evelina of a novel up to the elbows in soap-suds, washing her husband's and children's clothes ! Yet this must be the end of love in a cottage ! ”—

“ But you talked of cooking dinners, my dear aunt. It would be well if they had any dinners to cook.”

“ By the way, I wonder what this cottage produces to eat,” said Colonel Ormond.

“ It produces oat cakes,”* said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ Oat cakes !” re-echoed Colonel Ormond, looking aghast. “ Nothing but oat cakes !”

“ I think the good woman said she could give us a rasher of bacon.”

“ Bacon !” ejaculated Colonel Ormond, with the abhorrence of a Jew.

“ And so there is nothing to eat !” groaned Trevelyan.

“ And nothing to drink,” ejaculated Colonel Ormond.

“ Yes, there is plenty of milk,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ And abundance of water,” added Percival.

* Oat cakes are universally used instead of bread, by the cottagers among the lakes of Cumberland.

“ And how are we to sleep?” asked Colonel Ormond, ruefully.

“ Upon straw.”

“ Upon straw !” exclaimed the dismayed Colonel with a lengthening face.

“ Yes,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ The old man said he would turn the cows out of the byre to-night, and give it up to the gentlemen, with plenty of clean straw for their beds.”

The despair and lamentation of Colonel Ormond and Mr. Trevelyan exceeded all bounds. To have got a bad dinner at Buttermere, they had thought a most serious misfortune ; but to be kept all night in a cottage, with nothing to eat but oat cakes, and nothing to sleep upon but straw, seemed to them the climax of human misery.

The good people of the cottage insisted upon giving up their beds to the ladies, saying “ they could make shift weel eneuch.”

In the meantime the good old woman was bustling about. She drew from her hoards some tea, kept as a Sunday treat,—some moist sugar, of dark hue,—and as “ the gentry,” she thought, could not eat their oaten cakes, she baked upon the girdle a cake of wheaten flour, which she took from a locked wooden chest, kept apart for high days and holidays. When the cake was ready, she produced cream, in which the spoon almost stood upright, excellent butter, and plenty of fresh laid eggs ; and having spread her rural

feast upon a snowy white table cloth, with her best rustic courtesy she invited the company to partake of it.

Never was there a tea drinking more gay and joyous. No intreaty indeed could make the old couple sit down with them ; and though Percival good humouredly seized upon the good dame by force, and compelled her to take a seat by his side, and drink a cup of tea, she was awkward and miserable, and soon got away “ to see ’till the kye,” she said.

But the old man, who went out to look after “ the beasts,” (meaning the horses,) was utterly refractory with respect to sharing their repast. He wanted “ nae tea—naething but his supper ;” and his supper, when ready, consisted of sowens and milk, with oat cake, and a morsel of home-made cheese, over which he said a grace of patriarchal length.

To say the truth, he had inwardly been sadly shocked by the unchristianlike behaviour of his guests in not saying grace before they sat down to tea.

“ What a delectable old woman !” exclaimed Percival, who was sitting upon his three legged stool, eating the girdle cake with great gusto. “ I am over head and ears in love with her—especially since I ate her super-excellent cake. My rural visions begin to revive. I do think I’ll begin in sober earnest to ruralise.”

“ Do !—We’ll leave you here to-morrow to ruralise with the old woman,” said Harriet.

“ The *old* woman !—No, thank you, I ’d rather ruralise with a young one !”

“ That ’s a good one !—I believe you would, faith !” cried Trevelyan, bursting into one of his loud laughs.

“ And I believe you would not long ruralise with any woman,” said Emily. “ You would soon ‘ leave the shepherd’s humble reed, to start up at the bugle horn.’ ”

Percival started from his three-legged stool, and his eyes kindled. “ Follow the bugle !—the call to arms !—aye, over the world !—That I will !”

“ I beg you won ’t —— not to night at least,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ Defer your fit of martial glory till the morning I entreat, and let us go to rest ! Consider, these good people are not accustomed to sit up till midnight, like ourselves. So now, gentlemen, to your straw !”

Sweet was the sleep they enjoyed under the cottage roof; the natural consequences of the exercise of the day. Next morning the ’road was passable; and after an excellent breakfast, similar to the tea of the preceding night, with the addition of broiled ham for the gentlemen, the party set off homewards. No remuneration whatever could the old people be prevailed upon to accept for their hospitality. And finding that their honest pride was hurt by money being pressed upon them, Mrs. De Cardonnell persuaded the gentlemen to desist. But the next day, a cargo of presents was despatched up the valley to their cottage, consist-

ing of tea, sugar, and groceries of all kinds ; a new gown for the old woman, a new hat and waistcoat for the old man,—and every thing the shops of Keswick furnished likely to prove acceptable to them. There were two persons only of the party who sent nothing—Mr. Trevelyan and Colonel Ormond.

CHAPTER VIII.

A COXCOMB'S COURTSHIP.

“ C'est le rôle d'un sot d'être importun ; un habile homme sent s'il convient ou s'il ennuie.”

LA BRUYERE.

DURING the whole time the party remained at Keswick, Colonel Ormond continued to persecute Miss De Cardonnell with his affected flattery and assiduous attentions. Whenever she was compelled to listen to him, she amused herself by playing him off ;—most happily succeeding in exhibiting his hyperbolical compliments, and consummate conceit, in their native absurdity. Vanity and affectation, especially when gilded by fashion, were always in her eyes legitimate objects of wit and satire. With her, these generally dangerous talents were united with such perfect good nature and spirit of kindness, that however brilliant or well directed, they inflicted no rankling wound, even upon those against whose follies they were aimed. Her playful wit, indeed, like a cheerful flame, diffused brightness and gaiety around ; unlike that wit, too

commonly met with, which is played off only for the admiration of admiring crowds, and never illumines the domestic circle.

Emily, however, had not the smallest idea that Colonel Ormond's intentions were serious. It was reported that he had run through his fortune, and was looking out for a great heiress to repair his losses. She could therefore have no idea that he had any thoughts of marrying her. But believing the habit of flirtation to be so inveterate with him, that flirt he must with somebody; and accustomed to consider his unmeaning gallantry as a mere *façon de parler*, and himself as a subject for ridicule; she was so far from intending to encourage his hopes, that she never dreamt of his entertaining any hopes in which she was concerned.

The morning after their return from Buttermere, she was sitting at a remote window, intent upon drawing, while Colonel Ormond, leaning over the back of her chair, was whispering soft nonsense into her unheeding ear, in tones so low that no one else could catch the sound, while ever and anon she repeated the concluding words aloud, as if mechanically and unconsciously, and thinking of something else—to the infinite amusement of the rest of the party who were assembled near the fire.

“Lost your heart, have you?” she repeated after him, in the same deliberate, mechanical manner.

Another soft whisper proceeded from the Colonel's lips.

“Past recovery !” she again repeated. “No, no ;—I ’ll tell you where to find it ;—in the moon.”

“In the moon !” exclaimed the astonished Colonel aloud, pausing in the very act of opening his snuff-box.

“Yes, in the moon,” said Emily ; “for all things lost on earth are treasured there.

‘There heroes’ wits are kept in ponderous vases,
And *beaux*,—in *snuff-boxes* and tweezer cases.’ ”

She darted so bright and significant a glance at the Colonel and his snuff-box, as she pronounced these emphatic words, that somewhat disconcerted, and at a loss what to say, he opened his snuff-box, as if to look for his wits.

“But I have not hit upon the right lines after all.—Now I remember,” said Emily.

‘There is a place, so Ariosto sings,
A treasury for lost and missing things ;
Lost human wits have places there assign’d them,
And those who lose their senses there may find them.
It is the moon ; but then, O wondrous news !
You ’ll find no sense,—for you had none to lose.’

“You are really very obliging !” cried Colonel Ormond, reddening, and doubly provoked at the universal laugh which assailed his ears.

“Nay, Colonel Ormond, it is not my concern. The lines are Goldsmith’s, not mine. Of course I made no personal application, I only repeated them to you, to give you the proper direction

where to find your wits, which you said you had lost."

"I said I had lost my heart, you lovely, provoking ——"

"Your heart, was it?" interrupted Emily. "True; I had forgot. Well, you will find your heart in the moon too.

'There lovers' hearts are strung like hollow eggs,
There, faiths hang up, like cast-off clothes, on pegs;
Sighs, prayers, and broken vows, in heaps encounter,
Nailed, like bad shillings, fast upon the counter.'"

"Every word of that is extempore," said Elizabeth to Count Waldemar, who was vainly trying to suppress an immoderate fit of laughter.

Even Colonel Ormond himself actually very nearly laughed, a sign of rationality he very rarely evinced; and he was understood to say, that she certainly ought best to know where his heart was to be found, since she had stolen it.

"Stolen it! Stolen your heart? Not I indeed. That would really be

'To rob you of that which not enriches me,
And makes you poor indeed.'"

Still Colonel Ormond continued to persecute her with his whispered gallantry, till at last she seemed entirely to desist from giving him any answer whatever.

“Will you not even speak to me? Will you not vouchsafe me one word?” at length he exclaimed.

“I,—I beg your pardon: but really I have nothing to say.”

“Cruel Miss De Cardonnell!”—And the Colonel now poured forth a stream of soft reproaches, ending by beseeching her “not to look upon him so coldly, unless she wished to drive him to despair, for he lived only in her smiles.”

“Indeed! I am happy to find my smiles are so nourishing,” said Emily; “but really if you had not told me so, I should have thought you lived upon something more substantial; that the luncheon you ate this morning, for instance, might have been some support to you.”

She continued to attack the poor Colonel in a strain of such unmerciful raillery, that, discountenanced by the general laugh, he was at last forced to retreat.

“Poor Colonel Ormond!” exclaimed Count Waldemar, laughing, “he is really, as he himself says, *àperdument amoureux*, or, according to Percival, over head and ears in love—”

“With himself, he certainly is,” said Emily. “In his own dear self his whole affections are concentrated.”

“He insinuated, however, in pretty plain terms, that even his attachment to his own dear self was ex-

ceeded by his devotion to Miss De Cardonnell," said Count Waldemar.

"O, he is so much in the habit of making such speeches to every woman he meets, that he cannot help it. It arises purely from poverty of ideas. He has no other style of conversation."

"But I assure you," said Elizabeth, "even when you were not present,—this very morning, for example, he was employed in sounding forth your praises to me."

"I am sorry to hear it. I should have been much more flattered if he had been employed in abusing me."

"Why so?"

"Because, as somebody justly observes, '*Il y a des louanges qui medisent, et des calomnies qui louent*'; and Colonel Ormond's praise and censure are precisely of that description."

"Poor Colonel Ormond!" said Elizabeth. "After all, he is only a fool."

"Nay, Elizabeth; he is something much worse,—he is a coxcomb."

"And though all coxcombs are fools," said Count Waldemar, "all fools need not be coxcombs."

"No," said Emily, "a fool is made by nature, but a coxcomb is an animal of his own making."

Percival Wentworth now entered the room, and asked Emily what she had done with "the dear colo-

nel," as he always called him. "Did he not come to you?" he inquired.

"Yes;" said Emily.

" ' There came a certain *Colonel*, trimly dressed,
Fresh as a bridegroom, with his hair new curled,
His cravat tied laborious ;—(*lore profound !*)
He was perfumed like a milliner,
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
A pouncet box, which ever and anon
He gave his nose, and took 't away again.
And still he smiled and talked ;—
With many holyday and lady terms
He question'd me, and I, being galled
To be so pester'd with a popinjay,
Answer'd neglectingly, I knew not what,
He should or should not ; for it vexed me quite,
To see him shine so bright, and smell so sweet,
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman.' "

"A waiting gentlewoman!" exclaimed Percival, laughing,—"Excellent! I would give the world to tell him that you said he talked like a waiting gentlewoman, and looked like a popinjay."

"I wish you would tell him so," said Emily laughing. "It would do me a service, and him no harm."

"I'll go and see for him this moment," exclaimed her mischievous cousin. And so he did; but it was with very opposite intentions to those he professed. Perceiving from the first that Colonel Ormond's pursuit of Emily arose entirely from his mistake respect-

ing her fortune and expectations, Percival, whose supreme delight was mischief, had all along artfully encouraged him in his error; and without violating the literal truth, took care never to undeceive him in his idea of her being an only child, but had entered minutely into the real facts, that General De Cardonnell's estates were large, wholly unincumbered, and strictly entailed upon his daughter, failing male issue; that upon her marriage or coming of age, she would succeed to an independent fortune, which he magnified in large general sums; and that she had besides great expectations from her aunt, Lady Melmoth, whose state of health rendered it impossible she could live long, &c. He had also adroitly insinuated the idea that she entertained a secret predilection for Colonel Ormond, which she sought to conceal by affected avoidance and playful, sarcastic raillery.

He found the Colonel walking angrily about,—his pride desperately hurt at Miss De Cardonnell's treatment of him.

“Why, what have you done to my fair cousin, Colonel Ormond? She is in despair at your desertion of her; and she sent me to look for you;—but, by the way, I am betraying her confidence shamefully to let you know *that*.”

“I don't know what to make of her,” said the Colonel, pettishly. “She is very odd—she says such strange things.”

“She is!—She does! That's her way, when she

likes people. You may observe she is always very civil and attentive to men she does not like, or is indifferent to, — old Mr. Rolleston for instance ; but where she likes any man particularly, she laughs at him without mercy. She treats her favoured admirers just as the Russians treat their wives—they beat and ill use them, to shew their love for them.”

“ Indeed, but that must be very disagreeable,” said the Colonel. “ It is an odd way of shewing love. Why she laughed at *me* this morning, and treated *me* — I don’t know how !”

“ Ah ! you’re a happy fellow !—a happy fellow ! Ormond !”

“ Do you really think so ?” said the Colonel, doubtfully.

“ Think so ? Why I’m sure of it !—O if you only heard her speak of you ! Why, just now, she repeated from Shakespeare a quantity of poetry about you.”

“ Indeed !” said the Colonel, quite delighted.

“ Yes ; you have no idea of all she said about you when you were out of the room ! But she can’t bear you should think she likes you ; and she cannot believe you really like her. She thinks you only want to turn her head with a few compliments ; and she is persuaded that it is impossible that you, who have seen the most accomplished women in every country, and might choose from among the world, should ever think of her. It is excess of modesty.”

“ Amiable—bewitching excess of modesty !” said

Colonel Ormond, enraptured with this flattering picture of himself.

“ Now perhaps you would think from her manner, that she prefers others to you ? ”

“ Yes ; that impertinent foreign puppy, Count Waldemar,” said Colonel Ormond. “ I really almost thought it.”

“ How could you be so blind ? Don’t you see she puts on all that sort of thing, to conceal her real sentiments for you ? I know her so well ! Besides I know all she really thinks, from Elizabeth, from whom she has not a thought concealed. I assure you she looks upon *you* in a very different light to the Count.”

The credulous Colonel, whose vanity was equal to digesting any dose, however gross, returned to the house, convinced that Emily was secretly captivated with him, and that her manner was assumed in order to conceal it.

Elizabeth, whom Percival had from the first engaged in the conspiracy against Colonel Ormond, also assisted in encouraging him in this idea.

“ Ah, Percival ! you have not kept your word,” said Emily, in the evening, shaking her head reproachfully at him. “ The ‘ dear Colonel,’ as you call him, looks more conceited, and is a far greater plague than ever.”

“ O ! he is of the true spaniel kind ! ” said Percival, laughing, “ The worse you use him, the more will he fawn upon and flatter you. Be only kind to him, and you will see he will begin to snarl and growl directly.”

“ If I thought so !” said Emily, laughing.

“ Now do try !”

Emily however had little opportunity, even if she had had inclination, to try Percival’s plan of courtousness, for next day the party dispersed.

Mr. Trevelyan and Colonel Ormond went to make a visit to some friend of their own stamp, of gambling and Newmarket celebrity, on their way back to Rusland Hall. The following week Carlisle races were to take place, which these two gentlemen of course were to attend. There also Lord Borodale, with his sisters, who were to be chaperoned by their aunt, Lady Pierpoint, were going. Mrs. De Cardonnell and Emily had been much pressed, both by the Ladies St. Leger, and by Lord Borodale, to join the party ; but Mrs. De Cardonnell’s health at this time rendered her quite unequal to any dissipation ; and Emily could not be persuaded to leave her mother. Louisa Wentworth, however, joyfully accepted the invitation of the Ladies St. Leger, to accompany them. Percival and Mr. Dormer were also resolved to attend the races ; but nothing could induce Count Waldemar to be of the party. Vainly was he urged by solicitations on every side. He professed an invincible aversion to races, and drew a ludicrous picture of the dull pleasures and laborious idleness of a race week ;—the hardship of being shut up, in the beautiful days of a fleeting summer, in a confined lodging, in a narrow street of a little stupid country town, for the sake of meeting

with a set of strangers, many of whom are disagreeable, and all of them uninteresting,—to live continually in a crowd of company, without any of the pleasures of society; and to waste day after day in a monotonous round of parading, racing, betting, dining, dressing, and dancing. Nothing, not even the importunity of the Ladies St. Leger, could induce him to go through this truly English amusement; and he declared his intention of spending the time in making a tour of some of the remote lakes and valleys, little frequented or famed, but which he understood were well worth seeing.

Mr. and Mrs. Wentworth, with Elizabeth and Harriet Dormer, were going into Yorkshire, upon a visit to an old friend and relation there, Sir Gilbert Egerton. Gladly would they have secured Count Waldemar's company also, but he declined going.

"The lakes seem to possess great attractions for you, Count," said Trevelyan.

"They have great attractions," he coolly replied.

"Especially Coniston," added Trevelyan, significantly.

Count Waldemar, at the same moment, addressed some question to Lord Borodale, and seemed not to hear. But Percival Wentworth remarked to Trevelyan, that his observation had made Miss De Cardonnell blush.

"It is not *her* I meant, for all that, though," said Trevelyan, bluntly.

CHAPTER IX.

A DOMESTIC DAY.

——“ Trust me, child,
There lurks a serpent in this flowery path
Will sting thee to the quick.”

HURDIS.

ON the morning preceding that which had been fixed for the departure of the Wentworths on their Yorkshire visit, as Emily was riding on horseback along a shady lane in the neighbourhood of Coniston, she saw a gentleman come out of a small cottage by the road side, whom she soon recognized with surprise to be Count Waldemar. Pleasure sparkled in his eyes and involuntarily broke from his lips when he looked up and saw her. “ Will you allow me to attend you in your ride ?” he eagerly asked, “ I will overtake you in five minutes,”—and without waiting for permission or reply, he darted out of sight. Emily slowly walked her horse, but she had not much time to meditate upon the singularity of meeting him in so retired a spot, or, indeed, of meeting him at all:—for in less time than she had supposed it possible he

could have reached the spot where he said he had left his groom and horses, he was again at her side. He said, that finding Coniston was the most central situation for his excursions amongst the wild scenes he wished to visit, he had determined to make it his head-quarters, and had come to ruralise at the little inn, or rather, alehouse, at Coniston.

“The alehouse!” said Emily, laughing:—“the alehouse will never do for ruralising. But I suppose you have been looking at that cottage which has been to let furnished all the summer; and though it is not very romantic, being neither myrtled, nor jessamined, nor woodbined—nor casemented;—yet it is sequestered—and white washed—and thatched—and very neat and clean;—and at all events, it is a cottage, which is infinitely more sentimental than an alehouse. Pray when do you take possession of it, and commence hermit?”

Count Waldemar smiled, but said that the cottage was now occupied.

“Indeed! I did not know that!—And are you then acquainted with its tenants?” said Emily, with surprise; for notwithstanding her raillery, it was by no means a fit residence for a gentleman.

“I—I am—a little,” said Count Waldemar, with some hesitation. “I merely called to see an old man who has been ill.”

Emily had heard of more than one charitable action which he had done amongst the poor of the neigh-

bourhood, and attributing his evident embarrassment to his repugnance to speak of his own benevolence, she forebore to pursue the subject any further.

For a few minutes he seemed absorbed in thought ; but at the first sound of her voice, he resumed his usual flow of spirits and enlivening powers of conversation.

Emily was riding to a hill farm belonging to General De Cardonnell, at some distance. Their way lay over the tops of *the Fells*, (as the hills are there called,) through wide extended moors, and by the side of lonely mountain tarns : but “cheered by the sun and summer gale,” even this wild scenery had its beauties. The “bell heather” waved its purple blossoms ; scared by the sound of their horses’ feet, they saw “the muir fowl spring, on whirring wing,” from its heathy lair ; the curlew’s wild note, and the bittern’s cry, were heard from afar ;—and as they “drank the fresh spirit of the mountain breeze,” gazed upon the cloudless heights of the surrounding hills, and beheld, stretched far beneath them, the winding shores of Coniston Water, they agreed that this wild ride was singularly delightful and exhilarating.

When they returned to Coniston Hall, Count Waldemar followed Emily into the library, where Mrs. De Cardonnell was sitting with Dr. Doran, and instantly accepted her proposal that he should dine with them ; complaining that he had in vain laboured all the morning to extract an invitation from Miss De

Cardonnell, but that she had been inexorably deaf to his hints, and indeed would have shaken him off altogether, had he not stuck to her like a bur.

“Burs wait for no invitation,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing: “so if you had belonged to that race, you would have staid unasked.”

“Burs are generally unwelcome visitors,” said Count Waldemar, “in which class one would rather not be included. However, if you mean to get quit of me to-day, I believe you must shake me off like a bur.”

“I hope, on the contrary, you will stick to us like one till the Wentworths return,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

Count Waldemar said she would get quit of him for some days at least, as he was going the next morning to set off with Dr. Doran upon an excursion, partly picturesque, partly scientific, to West Dale and West Water, to explore the wild and romantic scenery of those remarkable regions, and to investigate their mineral treasures.

“And when you return, I hope you will publish your tour, and entitle it ‘Devious Rambles through the Wilds of West Dale, by two mad Mineralogists,’ ” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing; “for you, Count, seem almost as mad as Dr. Doran himself, who, though he sits there looking so composed, and is perfectly sane upon any other subject, is indisputably mineralogically mad.”

“Geologically,” said Dr. Doran, looking up from his newspaper with imperturbable gravity, “geologically you mean.”

“Geologically mad, then! I beg Geology’s pardon:—I always forget,—though Dr. Doran has taken true pains to beat it into my head,—that mineralogy is only the A, B, C, of geology—the ladder to that lofty height—the mere vestibule to Geology’s great temple. So then you are absolutely going all the way to Wast Dale in search of stones!”

Count Waldemar laughed, and acknowledged that the mania for geology had possessed him, and that he was fast departing from the path of reason, and wandering into the *stony* one of geology. “But there,” he added, turning to Dr. Doran, who still sat reading the newspaper with unmoved composure, “there is the *ignis fatuus* that led me astray.”

“I!—an *ignis fatuus*!” exclaimed the Doctor, looking up with a countenance in which gravity was burlesqued. “Now what *rason* can you have for calling an old, quiet, sober Doctor like me, a will o’ the wisp?”

“Why you ought to be flattered at being compared to any thing so brilliant,” said Count Waldemar. “And you cannot deny that you are quite as eccentric;—in short, you are a genuine will o’ the wisp, and I will prove it!—Did you not issue, like a shining meteor, out of the Irish bogs, dance across the channel, and lead me a will o’ the wisp dance over the moors and mountains of Lancashire?”

“ A pretty dance you led me this morning I know,” said the Doctor. “ Don’t you know you were to have met me at two o’clock ?”

“ Ah ! but I was led astray this morning by a brighter *ignis fatuus* even than you, Dr. Doran,” said Count Waldemar, with a glance at Emily. “ But you would receive my message of excuse——”

“ Yes,” said Dr. Doran, “ but not till past two. However, you really had a great loss in not being with me,” pursued the Doctor.

“ I cannot think so,” said Count Waldemar.

“ I met with a most beautiful specimen of chlorite, and with one supremely beautiful specimen of crystalized copper.”

“ I met with something infinitely more beautiful than all your specimens,” said Count Waldemar, stealing another glance at Emily, who was in the act of leaving the room to dress for dinner.

“ More beautiful than my specimen of green copper ore in crystals !” said the astonished Doctor, warmly, and beginning hastily to rummage his pockets.

“ There ! ‘ touch him, and no minister ’s so sore !” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing.

“ Where will you find any thing more beautiful than this ?” asked the Doctor ; but he laughed heartily when he found that Miss De Cardonnell was the rival to his favourite green copper beauty.

When Emily came down to dinner Dr. Doran

alone was in the room; and struck with the elegance of her dress, he began with his usual simplicity, to praise and admire it. At this moment Count Waldemar entered, and the Doctor appealed to his superior taste in confirmation of his own opinion; "for it is so simply beautiful," he said; "no finery!"

Emily blushed deeply, for her eyes met Count Waldemar's admiring gaze, which was fixed upon her fine hair, dressed with a sprig of the bell heather that he had gathered for her during their ride over the hills in the morning, and he thought he never saw her look so beautiful.

"But you say nothing, Count! What do you think of her dress?" asked Dr. Doran, impatiently.

"I think," said Count Waldemar, smiling, "that

'Th' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a barbarous skill,
'Tis like the poisoning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.' "

"O, Count Waldemar!" exclaimed Emily, laughing and blushing, "you should really leave that pretty hyperbole to Colonel Ormond; he would die of envy if he heard it."

Emily carelessly held in her hand a beautiful branch of roses, but observing that they were too large to wear as a bouquet, Count Waldemar gathered a small but very pretty full blown rose and bud, and presented it to her; but his eyes being fixed upon her face, not

upon the flower, he scattered the petals of the rose at her feet, and at the same moment drops of blood from his hand which he had wounded with a thorn, fell upon the leaves; he laughed at his own awkwardness, remarking however that it was a bad omen.

“An omen of what?” said Dr. Doran.

“Of coming evil and bloodshed;—of hope disappointed, even in the moment of fruition.”

“God forbid!” ejaculated Dr. Doran.

Emily placed the still unsullied rose bud in her breast. “This rose bud, at least, is a beautiful emblem of hope,” she said. “I remember once seeing a very ancient Etruscan statue of Hope, bearing in its hand a rose bud.”

“It is a fit emblem of Hope,” said Count Waldemar, “for it is as fallacious. Too probably the hope we cherish will fade without coming to maturity, like that rose bud you wear in your breast.”

“Most melancholy man!” exclaimed the Doctor, “you really console Miss De Cardonnell ill for the loss of her rose; and you cannot replace it, for there is not another: it was ‘the last rose of summer.’”

“What! are *you* speaking in poetic strains, too, Dr. Doran?” said Emily, with a smile.

“No, I leave that to the Count: he speaks in nothing else. The other day, when we were walking, he took it into his head to answer every thing I said to him in poetry.”

“It was not poetry, but prose run mad,” said Count Waldemar, smiling.

“ Never mind. Suppose you make some more such pretty verses, off hand, to Miss De Cardonnell about her rose.”

Emily’s expressive eyes, more eloquently than words, seemed to second the request, and Count Waldemar instantly wrote with his pencil the following extempore lines upon one of the leaves of his pocket-book, which he tore out and presented to Miss De Cardonnell.

Why rifle Flora’s breathing bower
For thee, whose favoured mind
Culls the rich sweets of every flower,
But leaves the thorn behind ?
For thee they spring, bewitching maid !
Their bloom—their fragrance thine ;—
I grasp the rose—its beauties fade,—
The thorn alone is mine.

Emily smiled, and breaking off one of the roses from the branch she held in her hand, she gave it to him, saying, “ No—not ‘ the thorn alone !’ you shall have the rose too !” with a playful smile of such enchanting sweetness, that, touched, transported, almost overpowered by his feelings, he could thank her only by a look more expressive than words ; he kissed the rose, and placing it in his breast, upon another leaf of his pocket book he wrote the following lines:—

Yes ! next my heart this rose I ’ll wear ;
Its bloom will fade ere morn,
Yet long unseen will rankle there,
Its hidden festering thorn.

“ My wilful, wayward muse,” he said with a smile,
 “ seems prophetically dismal this morning:—I try

‘ To strike the lyre to notes of gladness,
 The chord resounds with strains of sadness.’ ”

“ It is all owing to pricking your fingers with the thorn,” said Dr. Doran.

Count Waldemar laughed.

“ It is much to be lamented, and often has it been lamented, in prose and verse,” said Emily, “ that in this wide world there is no flower that does not fade, and no rose without a thorn.”

“ Is there not ?” said Count Waldemar, with an expressive glance. “ None ?”

“ Not that I know of. Tell me if there be. Have *you* ever seen any flower that blooms the whole year round, or any rose without a thorn? Pray”, seeing Count Waldemar about to speak, “ pray answer the question in verse, that is as easy to you as prose.”

He immediately wrote upon another blank leaf of his pocket-book,

Say hast thou seen on earth’s wide bound,
 At fall of eve or dewy dawn,
 One flower that blooms the year around—
 One rose *unique* without a thorn ?

Yes, Lady ! From their native skies
 Brought down, earth’s desert to adorn,
Friendship ’s the flower that never dies,
 And *Love* ’s the rose without a thorn.

Dr. Doran asked Emily to shew him that last bit of poetry, if it was no secret ; and after reading it with the greatest deliberation, he began to marvel at the talent of writing such things off hand. At last he descried some more writing on the other side of the leaf. "What ! some more poetry, I suppose. Let me see. 'For Pauline.' Pauline ! what's Pauline ?"

At the word "Pauline," Count Waldemar, who had not heard a single word of the Doctor's previous soliloquy, turned hastily round, and with some perturbation took the paper from his hand.

"Why now ! Why may not I read it ?" expostulated the Doctor.

"It is only a memorandum," said the Count, with some degree of embarrassment.

"O, I beg pardon ; I thought it was poetry," said the Doctor.

At this moment Mrs. De Cardonnell entered the room, and dinner was announced.

The day passed happily and rapidly away. No one understood the happy art of trifling better than Count Waldemar. No one could embellish any and every subject with more grace, variety, animation, wit, and talent. The extent and accuracy of his information, his acute remarks, ingenious illustrations, good taste, and correct judgement, rendered his inexhaustible flow of conversation peculiarly delightful. It was never deficient, never overpowering, and wholly without effort. In him strong natural powers of intellect,

highly cultivated, were united with high passions and feelings. But as Emily justly observed, "There is genius in his character. It is to that it owes its great charm."

Dr. Doran's persevering inquiries turned the conversation upon mines. He asked many questions respecting the salt-mines of Wielitzka in Poland, which Count Waldemar had visited; who gave a description of the transparent pillars, and crystalline halls of those subterranean regions, which, as Emily observed, might have served the Princess Scheherazade for the embellishment of her thousand and one nights. He contrasted them with the gloomy iron mines of Dalecarlia, where the great Gustavus was buried in concealment, when an exile from his throne. The conversation then turned upon the Continent; and he entered into an animated discussion with Mrs. De Cardonnell respecting France. She had resided at Paris immediately before,—he, since the revolution; and no pictures could well be more opposite than those they drew of its past and present state. Both agreed in their estimation of the low state of morals, and the want of true religious principles amongst all classes, and in the evil effects thus produced upon the national character and happiness; but they could by no means agree in their estimate of manners.

"The manners of the French people," Count Waldemar said, "from the bourgeois to the beggar, are extremely pleasing. There is a native politeness,

an alacrity to oblige, and a degree of gaiety and good humour about them, which are irresistibly engaging ; and compared with the roughness and surliness of the manners of the common people in this country, they appear to peculiar advantage."

" Of all people in the world, the French certainly best understand the art to please," said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

" But," said Count Waldemar, " paradoxical as it may seem, I think the manners of the common people by much the best, because they are the most natural. In those of the upper classes there is something very artificial ; indeed every thing they say or do, or even write or think, strikes me as artificial. This is their grand defect as men and authors, and it pervades their society, their manners, and their literature. All is done for effect. They constantly sacrifice ' *L'être au paroître*,'—' truth to tinsel.' It is not nature, but the ' *Salon* ' that they think of. Their taste is never for simplicity,—always for ornament. They like every thing as well as their dresses ' *bien garnies*.' "

" But in the highest ranks what brilliance and wit !" said Mrs. De Cardonnell. " All the grace, and charm, and spirit of conversation, can only be felt and understood in the first Parisian circles."

" Such it was I doubt not," said Count Waldemar. " But whatever Paris might have been, it certainly is no longer the seat of elegance and refinement, of wit and taste,—the school of manners and of true polite-

ness. It is no longer graced by those 'master-spirits' who were not only formed to charm and shine themselves, but to inspire others with the true '*esprit de société*.' It has experienced a sad change. Men without birth or education have risen to wealth and power by crimes which ought to have conducted them to the scaffold. The noblesse you now meet are as '*roturier*' in mind and manners, as they were in station; and even at court they retain the most disgusting and offensive habits. A true gentleman is a rarity in France."

"In confirmation of your remark," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "I must own that among all the French officers, now prisoners on parole at Brayness, there is only one gentleman, the Chevalier Montauban."

"Then you are acquainted with this gentleman?"

"We used to see him frequently," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "and were much pleased with his society. But he is now under close confinement, having thrown up his parole, in consequence of being deprived of the innocent liberty of visiting a few of the neighbouring families, and of acting French plays."

Emily gave a lively description of the amusement she used to experience from this little French theatre, and spoke in high terms of the Chevalier Montauban's talents and character.

Count Waldemar made many inquiries about him.

Mrs. De Cardonnell said that he was not a military, but a medical officer, belonging to Buonaparte's medical staff, and one of the *sçavans* who accompanied the French expedition to Egypt. Dr. Doran added,

that he was a celebrated anatomist and chemist, and a very scientific man.

“He is a very entertaining person,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell,—“possessing all the vivacity, and wit and ingenuity, of his countrymen, and an incomparable comic actor.”

“The French are indeed incomparable comic actors,” said Count Waldemar,—“and well they may be, for even off the stage, they are always acting. They have so much tact, and so happily catch all the lighter shades of manners and conduct,—all the trick and finesse, and petty intrigue of life and character, that their address, their wit, their lively spirits, their own incessant efforts at seeming, their quick sense of the ridiculous, their great estimation of the importance of little things, and their extraordinary talent for mimicry,—all tend to render them inimitable painters of comedy.”

“They are admirable comedians,” said Emily, “but most wretched poets.”

“Yes,—because their language is unfitted for poetry,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“But that of itself is a proof of the want of the true spirit of poetry,” said Count Waldemar, “for great poets, or great and universal poetic feeling in a nation, create a poetic language for themselves.”

“The French certainly do want poetic genius and imagination,” said Emily.

“Yes,” said Count Waldemar, “and these never can exist where nature is not truly felt and adored in

all her majesty and beauty. To the French, the book of nature seems shut. They have no taste or feeling for its external beauties: they live but for artificial society. Even their best authors never seem to go down into the heart, or draw from its deep store of passions and feelings,—the only true source of all that is great and sublime. They dare not look abroad for themselves. They are like sheep, walking one behind another, in a narrow beaten path. They do not venture out into the excursive field of nature.”

“The French writers,” said Emily, “seem to think more of the manner than the matter,—of the expression than the thought;—of the coat, than of the man.”

“Exactly,” said Count Waldemar, laughing; “and as critics, they proceed much in the same liberal manner as a tradesman measuring goods upon a yard wand. They have but one standard,—their own; a false, artificial, confined rule; and if other nations differ from it but an inch, they pronounce them *mauvais*.”

“But surely,” said Emily, “Madame de Stael at least has diverged from the common track.”

“Yes,—but then she has fixed artificial wings upon her shoulders, and flown away altogether,—quite among the clouds;—and sometimes, like the unlucky Dædalus, getting too high, the wings drop off, and down she falls.”

“You are very severe,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing. “But whatever they may be as authors, I cannot but think they are very entertaining compa-

nions, and that they understand an invaluable secret, which we much want in England,—that of making the most of every little passing pleasure, and of enjoying life. With fewer ‘appliances and means to boot,’ they are a far happier people than the English: and you must acknowledge, Count, that they understand the art of conversation better than any other nation. Even their very language is the best adapted for talking, of any in the world.”

“I suppose practice makes them perfect,” said Count Waldemar. “If the French talk the best, they certainly talk the most of any set of people that ever existed. What an unmerciful chattering they do keep up! How often have I wished that some of them were gifted with that ‘grand talent pour le silence,’ which they so adroitly praised in the Englishman!”

“The French do not seem much to your taste,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing, “pray what do you think of the Germans?—at least they are silent enough.”

“Certainly no people can be more opposite,” said the Count. “The moment I crossed the German boundary, I was struck with the contrast between them. The Frenchman is full of eager animation about every trifle;—the German, it seems scarcely possible to animate at all. The whole business of the Frenchman’s life seems to be amusement; but the German makes a serious business even of his amusement. The

Frenchman talks so much, he has no time to think, and the German thinks so much, he has no leisure to talk."

"Then you think the Germans very dull?"

"Somewhat dull companions, I own; but they improve. There is a power of intellect, a steadiness of purpose, and a sincerity of heart about the Germans, that win one's esteem. At first, certainly, the formal, monotonous, *mechanical* drawing-rooms of the little German courts were triste enough. They seemed little better than an assemblage of puppets; but I soon found, that, beneath the unbending etiquette in which they are intrenched, these people really had minds and hearts; that they were distinguished by deep thought, extensive information, strong feelings, and powerful genius. But it is not fair to form an estimate of the great body of the people by the ancient nobility of these little German courts, who live apart by themselves, and exactly as their ancestors did before them: and so engrossed are their very souls with the endless minutiae of ceremonies and etiquette, and petty intrigues for precedence or favour,—that they may be considered mere court machines; so that the highest order may perhaps be said intellectually to be the lowest. But the nation at large, for which I entertain a very high respect, are a very musical, a very literary, a very thinking, and a very serious people. Would they were not *quite* so serious!"

Mrs. De Cardonnell laughed, and inquired, since

he was so fastidious as to find the new French nobility coarse, and the old German nobility dull, where he conceived the best society was now to be found?

“In London, decidedly,” said Count Waldemar. “The best,—the only very superior society is to be found in London. Society in England has gained what it has lost in France,—ease, elegance, and refinement,—united to talent of the highest order.” And he drew such a picture of England and English society, that Mrs. De Cardonnell told him he painted it ‘*con amore*.’

“Perhaps I do,” he said, “for if not the country of my birth, it is of my adoption. If Denmark was my parent, England was my tutor. I have lived by turns in every country of Europe, but none is to be compared to this:—no other land,—not even my own, can be so dear to me as England.”

“You surprise me,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell; “for even our climate, with its fogs and vapours, is generally sufficient to make foreigners detest our country.”

“The fogs and vapours of the climate,” said Count Waldemar, “much abused as they are, give but additional enjoyment to the in-door pleasures and social enjoyments of home. Where can you even see a room like this,” he exclaimed, as he looked around him, “out of England?—Comfort, for which no other nation has even a name,—domestic comfort,—home-felt happiness,—the best and purest enjoyments of our nature,—are only perfectly to be felt in England.

What does 'society' in other countries mean?—Balls, assemblies, *caffés*, operas, theatres; to fly from the domestic circle, no matter where. The best society in England is to be found—at home."

"And home I must go," said Dr. Doran, rousing himself from a semi-soporific state, and getting upon his legs. "Do you know what o'clock it is, Count?"

"No; do you?" said Count Waldemar.

It was indeed late, but before they went away, Count Waldemar, recollecting that he had promised to give Miss De Cardonnell a translation of the words of a German air which he had taught her, hastily pulled out the same unlucky pocket-book which he had produced in the morning, and taking out the paper, presented it to her.

As soon as they took their leave, Mrs. De Cardonnell went up to her own room, and Emily set her candle for a moment, upon the chimney-piece, while she read the verses he had given her. She was interrupted by the butler presenting a letter to her which he picked up from the carpet;—but still, keeping her eye upon the verses, she mechanically unfolded the letter, supposing it to be one of those unmeaning, every-day letters, which are left about in every house: but carelessly glancing at it, as she was in the act of tossing it into the fire, her eye was caught by the signature 'Pauline', and she saw that it was written in French. She started, and instantly closed it, but not before her eye had involuntarily caught a few words which strongly excited her curiosity. The

letter was directed in French, in a small, unpractised looking hand, to Count Waldemar, at Mr. Wentworth's. Emily stood gazing intently at this direction, whilst a thousand conjectures as to its writer and the nature of its contents, crowded into her mind. "Pauline!"—that was the very name Dr. Doran had found written on the leaf of the pocket-book in the morning. She remembered Count Waldemar's embarrassment at the discovery;—his eagerness to prevent it being seen. She remembered too, the story of the Frenchwoman and the child, who, by Louisa's account, came to see him at Mr. Wentworth's, on the morning of the ball, and his ride through the rain the following morning to keep an appointment. Suspicions, half undefined, sprung up in her mind, but were instantly dismissed. "He is, he must be, incapable of such baseness!" she exclaimed; and hastily locking up the letter in her desk, as if afraid to trust herself with the temptation of unravelling this mystery, she left the room.

CHAPTER X.

A COUNTRY DINNER VISIT.

“ Defend us, all ye Saints ! though sinners,
From many days like these, or dinners.”

SOAME JENYNS.

DR. DORAN having occasion to see one of the servants at Coniston Hall, who was ill, and under his care, called with Count Waldemar, before setting off for Wast Water, at an early hour. But Emily was already down stairs ; and while the Doctor was visiting his patient, she gave the Count the letter he had dropped the night before. But in attempting to explain the matter, her embarrassment became so great, that she abruptly stopped, and the colour mounted up to her temples.

Count Waldemar with earnestness assured her that he felt quite certain that his letter, or any letter, would be perfectly safe in her hands.

“ But I opened it,” said Emily, speaking with difficulty.

The Count looked surprised, and in turn coloured.

“ I opened it,” she continued, “ thoughtlessly, without looking at the direction. I saw immediately it was no letter of mine ; and I hope I need not assure you, that I did not intentionally read a word of it.”

Count Waldemar instantly expressed the fullest confidence of this. Still, however, he seemed embarrassed and uneasy ; and after hesitating a moment, he began, “ If you would not think me impertinent in intruding my own private affairs upon you, I would venture——”

But most provokingly, at this moment Dr. Doran abruptly entered the room, declaring that they were far too late, and summoned him to set off immediately. Mrs. De Cardonnell’s maid also entered with a message from her mistress ; so that Count Waldemar was obliged to mount his horse, leaving his explanation unattempted and Emily on the rack of curiosity.

Mrs. De Cardonnell and Emily were on this day engaged to dine at Rusland Hall, a prospect by no means attractive.

Emily observed to her mother, that there could be no gentlemen, because Lord Borodale had gone to visit his friend Mr. B——, on his way to Carlisle races, which were to commence in two days’ time ; Count Waldemar was on his road into Wast Dale ; and Mr. Trevelyan and Colonel Ormond had gone to see a grand pugilistic “ fight ” at Kendal.

Although the absence of the two latter was not very deeply to be deplored, Emily looked forward to the party with dismay; and at last she said, "I should like extremely to be excused, it will be so insufferably dull! Could you not carry my excuse instead of myself, mamma?"

"Certainly; I can say it will be so insufferably dull that you beg to be excused."

"O no! no!" said Emily, laughing.

"But what else can I say?"

"Any thing but the truth, certainly," said Emily, laughing.

"Then I am to repeat the old established story, I suppose, 'That you are *very sorry, it is not in your power to have the pleasure* of dining with Sir Reginald and Lady Rusland, because you are *not well*,' &c. &c. which includes four falsehoods in one breath—for you are *not sorry*; it is *in your power*; it would be *no pleasure*; and you are *quite well*. And this tissue of lies imposes upon nobody. The truth is always understood and felt, namely,—that you do not choose to go."

"But then, mamma, what is to be done? Do you think that one ought to be at the mercy of all the stupid acquaintances who choose to ask one to dine; and thus sacrifice one's time, inclination, pursuits, and pleasures to them?"

"Certainly not; it is optional to visit whom you please. Decline the invitation if you please; but if

an invitation be accepted, I think it ought to be kept like any other promise or engagement. Besides, Sir Reginald and Lady Rusland, though certainly not the most entertaining of companions, are highly respectable people. He is an honourable man—a conscientious, upright magistrate, a good master, a good landlord, and a good husband. She is a pious and most charitable woman. We cannot always associate only with brilliant talents, or ‘master spirits’—especially in the country.”

“Well,” said Emily, “it may be a proper penance, but I am sure it is a real one. Nothing is so tiresome as to be obliged to converse with people who have not a single idea in common with oneself.”

“True,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, “yet there are many reasons why it is better to submit to this ‘penance’ of an annual dinner with the Ruslands, than break off all intercourse with them. Besides, you may happen to meet there with others more intelligent.”

“You will do so to-day, mamma; I dare say you will not find it dull, because Lord Ardentower will be there,—but then he will not talk to me.”

“And if you were to stay at home, Emily, every body would say it was because there were no young men;—because Lord Borodale and Count Waldemar were not to be there.”

“Perhaps ‘every body’ would say the truth then,” said Emily, with her usual ingenuousness, and laugh-

ing, "for if either, or both, of them were to be there, I should go with pleasure, in the expectation of being amused."

"Then shall I tell Lady Rusland, that you beg to be excused, because neither Lord Borodale nor Count Waldemar are going?"

Emily's amusement was great,—particularly at the idea of how Lady Rusland would look when such a speech was addressed to her. "Then you think I must go, mamma?"

"Not at all; you may stay, and shall stay, if you please. I own I would rather that you went."

"Then I will go," said Emily; and they went.

The aspect of things on their arrival certainly was not promising. Sir Reginald and Lady Rusland sat in state to receive their party; which at this time consisted of Mr. Braithwaite, an elderly country 'squire, who stood apart and descanted with one or two other country 'squires, upon weather, roads, crops, poachers, and quarter sessions; but after the first salutation was over, none of them seemed to perceive that any ladies were in the room, much less to dream of entering into conversation with them. Mr. Braithwaite's wife and elderly maiden sister were seated in formal silence, industriously exercising their powers of observation; being evidently engaged in a most minute examination of the make, materials, and cost of every article of dress worn by every lady in the room; and they

seemed as completely to overlook the male part of the creation, as Mr. Braithwaite did the female. There were two very young and somewhat awkward Miss Braithwaites, who sat with their hands before them, looked frightened when spoken to, and produced a monosyllable by way of answer.

This worthy justice of the peace and his progenitors had lived in a remote corner of Westmoreland from generation to generation, as much rooted to the spot as the trees which shaded their ancient hall, and partaking almost a similar species of vegetative existence. In their formal annual visits to their few neighbours, they put on company dresses, company manners, and company faces. But alas! they had no company conversation; and they looked as much afraid of strangers as if they had been wild beasts.

Scarcely a momentary break in this chilling formality was made by the entrance of Lord Ardentower and Lady Alicia St. Leger. Lady Harriet was extremely sorry she could not have the pleasure of dining at Rusland Hall, being indisposed with a cold; and no doubt Lady Alicia was only prevented by Lord Ardentower's express will and pleasure, from having the same indisposition. Lady Rusland's concern for Lady Harriet's cold was expressed in the most proper and becoming terms and at very considerable length.

Then ensued an awful pause.

The ladies were still seated in a formidable circle, and the gentlemen collected together in a knot at a

distant window, with the exception of Lord Ardentower, who placed himself by the side of Mrs. De Cardonnell. After looking round him with profound gravity, he said to her, "Henceforward I shall be a believer in the magic art."

"And pray what spell can have converted your Lordship to a belief in magic?"

"The sight of this goodly company. Magicians draw a circle round the victims they wish to enchant; and can we hesitate to believe in its magic influence, when we behold here ocular demonstration of it? I always used to think that Lady Rusland was no conjuror, but now I see my error. She is a most potent conjuror, and has conjured us into this circle where our minds and bodies are completely spell-bound, and we can neither speak, move, nor think, freely."

"I made an effort to break the charm," said Mrs. De Cardonnell. "I courageously walked to the window, looked out upon the fish-pond, marvelled at the leaden statue of Neptune in the middle, who still, as of yore, there holds his watery reign—amidst the ducks. I even extolled the artificial green mount, crowned by the round brick summer-house; I propounded divers queries of various sorts and kinds to Sir Reginald and his lady; but my attempts to break the formal silence, or even to make Lady Rusland rise from her chair, were wholly unsuccessful."

"Rise!" said Lord Ardentower. "Why she keeps

her seat as pertinaciously as Lady Morgan's friend's pet toad, which, her Ladyship avers, sat voluntarily upon a tile for nine years."

Mrs. De Cardonnell laughed, and said that her efforts even to carry on any thing like conversation had wholly failed of success.

"Success was impossible," said Lord Ardentower. "Conversation is like a game of battledore and shuttlecock; how is it possible to keep it up on one side only?"

"But my innocent little stratagem even, to break the formality of the good people, utterly failed," said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

"No, not even your witchery could disenchant the circle, spell-bound by that enchantress, Lady Rusland."

"Shall I tell her that your Lordship says she has enchanted the whole present company, and that you yourself feel her powers of enchantment to be irresistible?" archly inquired Mrs. De Cardonnell.

"Do! pray do! I would give the world to see her aspect when you made the speech. All the severity of iron female virtue would be in arms against what she would conceive to be my presumptuous confession of devotion. I should have to fight Sir Reginald. Conceive the comic effect of such a duel! But pray at the same time intreat Lady Rusland in mercy to me and mankind, to disenchant us; and if it

be possible, to reanimate these unfortunate petrified figures."

"They remind one," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "of the company that the fishermen in the Arabian Nights found sitting in the palace of the King of the Black Islands, more than half turned into marble."

"Exactly! And that is the effect of the very sight of Lady Rusland's face. Like the Gorgon's head of old, it has the power of turning the beholders into stone. Its torpifying effect is irresistible. Already I feel its icy influence creeping through my veins, and I shall soon become a complete petrification, like the old man's wig we saw at Knaresborough."

"Or like Sir Reginald himself," said Mrs. De Cardonnell. "How stony is his look! He seems completely petrified."

"And petrifying," added Lord Ardentower. "I know nothing so like going into a shower-bath, as his society. It is a sort of mental rheumatism, or chill fit of the ague. He must have been a morsel chipped off the seventeenth century, to which he naturally belonged, and fallen by chance upon this 'laggard age.'"

"Pity he had not remained upon the block from whence he sprung!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

"And there has been a similar anachronism in Lady Rusland's birth," said Lord Ardentower; "she

was evidently intended to have flourished two hundred years ago, together with her lord."

"And because by some mistake they were not born at their right time, they want to push the world back again, and resuscitate the seventeenth century."

"And to say truth, they succeed admirably," said Lord Ardentower. "Only look at this assemblage! they want nothing but ruffs and fardingales to fit them for that whalebone age. But Sir Reginald himself is certainly one of the most extraordinary productions of nature and education. Admire the unbending perpendicularity of his angular figure, the smooth suavity of his address, the undistinguishing smile he wears upon his countenance, and the unvarying monotony of his speech! Then his courteous, formal bows! The difficulty with which he makes them ought to enhance their value, for one would imagine that sooner than bend he would break."

"He looks so exactly like a poker, that one can hardly believe that he has not swallowed one," said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

"Never was such buckram politeness seen since the days of Sir Charles Grandison!" exclaimed Lord Ardentower. "What an admirable companion he would have made to that renowned piece of insipid, still life! I cannot but lament that he had not been born to be the cotemporary of that worthy, and not of mine,—unworthy as I am of him!—and as to Lady

Rusland, she would have made an admirable maid of honour to 'Good Queen Bess.'"

"I can almost fancy that she actually flourished as such, and has been preserved unchanged as a specimen of ancient ladies," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing.

"But in the present day," continued Lord Ardentower, "I think she would appear to the greatest advantage, as one of the figures in the collection of wax-work at Exeter 'Change. They would be company exactly to her taste, strictly preserving the immovable formality she dotes upon, and never, upon any occasion, infringing the precise rules of ancient decorum. Nor would it be possible to discover, that she herself was not composed of the same materials as the wax women."

"O, spare poor Lady Rusland, my dear Lord!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing. "She is really very good and inoffensive,—and quite defenceless."

"Quite indefensible, you mean. What is her goodness to us, when she inflicts upon us her dullness? Her goodness betters us not. As somebody observes, 'To be good and disagreeable, is high treason against virtue.' She is wilfully formal, and determinedly dull: indeed, Rusland Hall may be called the Temple of Dulness, and Lady Rusland its tutelary goddess.—But dinner, at last; for which I give thanks!"

At table, Emily was placed on the left of Sir

Reginald Rusland,—Lady Alicia St. Leger, occupying the right. The courteous baronet, with punctilious attention, went through every form and ceremony of politeness, in its most ancient extent, and could not be accused of neglecting to ask his fair supporters to eat of each and every substantial dish upon the well loaded board : but there his conversation stopped, saving and excepting that ever and anon he might be perceived to rack his brains for some question or remark suited to the capacities of young ladies, such as he conceived them,—which, with due solemnity, he at length propounded. Desirous to break the frequent and awful pauses which ensued, Emily in vain sought to engage Lady Alicia St. Leger in conversation. But her Ladyship was one of those young ladies whom nothing but the presence of a young man can animate, and who have not a word to bestow upon one of their own sex,—not to mention that her whole soul was filled with anticipations of the approaching Carlisle races. Hopelessly Emily cast her eyes upon her other neighbour, Miss Bridget Braithwaite, a red armed gawky girl of fifteen, from whose *mauvaise honte* nothing but “yes, ma’am !” and “no, ma’am,” could be extracted. In despair, therefore, she resigned herself to endure the irksome tediousness of the repast, consoling herself with the reflection that it must have an end. At length the ladies were liberated, and in due order retired to the drawing-room. But alas ! Emily found “in change of place no change of pain.” The same

rigid formality prevailed,—not even a fire broke the gloom of the large, stately old-fashioned drawing-room; for it was the laudable custom of Rusland Hall to endure the last extremity of cold, rather than light a fire before the appointed day; and to suffer the martyrdom of St. Lorenzo, and be broiled alive with heat, sooner than extinguish it before the established time. The apartment itself, with the rich immoveable old chairs and pier tables pinned against the walls, afforded no resource. No music, no prints, no books, no nick-nacks! Poor Emily looked around in hopeless despondency, and at last almost began to wish for the frivolous small talk of Colonel Ormond, or the Newmarket slang of Mr. Trevelyan. In this wish she was somewhat unexpectedly gratified; for after the ladies had been labouring in the drawing-room, during two mortal hours, to keep up a languid conversation—‘and labour dire it proved, and weary woe,’—Trevelyan’s randem-tandem drove furiously to the door, bringing himself and Colonel Ormond fresh from “the fight” at Kendal. Trevelyan joined those gentlemen who were still adhering to the bottle, and Colonel Ormond presented himself in the drawing-room.

But Lord Ardentower, his dreaded tormentor, was there before him, whose attacks so grievously annoyed the unfortunate Colonel, that at last he was fain to fly, even from Miss De Cardonnell, to escape his Lordship’s persecutions; and he entrenched himself

in the furthest corner of the room, between Miss Bridget Braithwaite and the whist table.

“That animal,” said Lord Ardentower, looking after him, “as Shakspeare says, has robbed many beasts of their peculiar characteristics. He is as obstinate as a mule, as cunning as a cat, as impertinent as a monkey, as deceitful as a fox, as troublesome as a gnat, as malicious as a wasp, as vain as a peacock, as chattering as a magpie, as stupid as an owl, and as insensible as an oyster.”

“You really pursue the poor Colonel with the most relentless severity, my Lord!” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing. “Why crush an insect with a giant’s strength—or ‘break a butterfly upon the wheel?’”

“An insect—He is a reptile!”

“But why torture even a reptile?”

“Not if it had any feeling. But some creatures have none, and Colonel Ormond is one of them. The sensibility of an oyster, as I just told you, is as great as his.”

“But oysters and Colonel Ormonds I imagine, have tolerably strong selfish feelings, though they may be wholly devoid of all others. It would not disturb the oyster to see another oyster cut up—nor Colonel Ormond to see another man cut up; but neither of them like to be cut up themselves.”

“But he does not feel it. Nature has encased him in such an ample coat of native dulness, that he is invulnerable to the light and delicate shafts of wit and

satire,—and they rebound from him as the arrows from the hide of the armadillo. You must cut him through and through with sharp knives before you can make him feel ; and I do like to make an animal feel that has no feeling for any thing but himself.”

“ Have you no pity upon him ? ” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing.

“ Pity !—no !—contempt, aversion, chastisement, and scorn, are all he merits. O if you knew him as well as I do ! ”

The necessity for moving from the sofa, in order to resign to the female Braithwaites their shawls, upon which he was sitting, now obliged Lord Ardentower to rise, and he moved behind the now vacant card table, upon which Colonel Ormond was leaning, talking with much emphasis, but little discretion, to Lady Alicia St. Leger and Miss De Cardonnell.

After listening, unobserved, for a few moments, “ And pray, Sir,” enquired Lord Ardentower, “ against whom, may I ask, is all this eloquent philippic directed ? ”

“ I—I—was only speaking of Count Waldemar, my Lord ! ” stammered out the startled Colonel, looking frightened at the very sound of the voice of his arch enemy.

“ Then, Sir, I can only say, that your censure of Count Waldemar is a satire upon yourself. It can only proceed from one of two causes ;—either from utter incapacity to estimate his superiority,—as the fly contemned the noble proportions of the column,—or

from the envious wish to degrade to your own level the noble character you cannot emulate. But, sir, you cannot even understand the character of such a man, because you are as unlike him ‘as I to Hercules.’ You cannot, I say, comprehend what he is,—but I will tell you what he is *not*. Sir, Count Waldemar is *not* a man who will waste life in frivolous or base pursuits; he is *not* a man who fancies himself the admiration of the world, while he is its scorn; he is *not* a man who will lose his fortune at the gaming table, and then throw his reputation after it; he is *not* a man who will break the word of honour he has once given, whatever it may cost him to keep it; he is *not* a man who will make assertions that he cannot prove; he is *not* a man who would calumniate behind his back, the person to whose forbearance he owed the preservation of the little reputation he had left;—but, sir, Count Waldemar is a man born for noble purposes of mind, bent upon all that is great and good, incapable of meanness or dishonour, filled with noble ambition, endowed with intellectual powers of the highest order—with knowledge, taste, talent, ‘wit at will;’—brave, generous, magnanimous, and just. In short, sir, Count Waldemar is truly a *noble* man, and he who condemns him is an *ignoble* coxcomb.”

Enraged, ashamed, abashed, Colonel Ormond knew not where to look during this speech. His conscious glance quailed beneath Lord Ardentower’s unsparing eye. But there was another countenance beaming

with sympathy, admiration, and pleasure, and whose bright, glistening eye seemed to drink in every word : it was Emily's.

Colonel Ormond at last stammered out, that certainly Count Waldemar was a very good sort of man, but——

“ Good sort of man ! ” interrupted Lord Ardentower with ineffable scorn. “ Yes, sir, he *is* good—and great. And let me tell you, sir, that all the truly good are great, although all the great are not good, ‘ Bon homme et grand homme tout à la fois ; reunion sans laquelle l’on n’est jamais complètement ni l’un, ni l’autre.’ In short,

‘ He is complete in feature and in mind,
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.’ ”

Lady Alicia, however, tossed her pretty little head and said, somewhat pettishly, “ But it is very odd, papa, that Count Waldemar should choose to live at that wretched little inn at Coniston, now the Wentworths are away, when you asked him to stay with us, and to go with us too to Carlisle races.”

“ Why, that does detract from his great merits materially,” said Lord Ardentower, laughing.

“ Well, I do think it very odd he should prefer staying at Coniston alone, to staying with us.”

“ Perhaps he finds great attractions at Coniston,” said Lord Ardentower, with a momentary glance at Miss De Cardonnell.

“ He ! he ! he ! ” broke out Trevelyan, with a hoarse laugh. “ Yes, he does faith !—There are very pretty girls about Coniston. He, he, he ! ”

“ Count Waldemar is gone to Wast Water,” Emily began.

“ That’s all fudge,” cried Trevelyan. “ He’ll not stay long there, I’ll bet you what you please. No, no ! Coniston’s the place. The *beauty* of Coniston’s the thing for him ! He ! he ! he !—do you take ? He ! he ! he !—a good one faith ! is’nt it ?—The *beauty* of Coniston will bring him back. By Jove he’s a good judge of *beauty* too. He’s confoundedly sly, is’nt he Ormond ? Yes ! yes ! we know why the Count likes Coniston !—He ! he ! he ! ”

Colonel Ormond, meantime, seemed to sit upon thorns, as if dreading that Trevelyan, who was elevated with wine, should come out with something contrary to “ les bienséances,” or draw down upon him afresh Lord Ardentower’s vengeance ; and he endeavoured, by looks and signs, to check Trevelyan’s flow of talk.

Lord Ardentower stared, and seemed as if in the act to speak ; but at this moment Mrs. De Cardonnell, who had been detained, standing, during this dialogue by Lady Rusland’s long formal parting compliments, hastily came up, and summoning her daughter to depart, broke up the conference and the party.

Grave and thoughtful, Emily returned home. The strange hints Trevelyan had thrown out, joined to

Count Waldemar's visit to the lonely cottage,—the letter she had found from “ Pauline,” the memorandum respecting her in his pocket-book, and the embarrassment he had shewn whenever the subject had been mentioned, raised suspicions in her mind which she was ashamed to indulge, and yet unable to repress.

CHAPTER XI.

PAULINE.

——“ Treacherous man !

Thou hast beguiled my hopes ; nought but mine eye
Could have persuaded me that thou wert false.”

SHAKSPEARE.

It happened that Emily's ride next day was directed down the very same rural lane in which, two days before, she had met Count Waldemar. As she passed the white cottage which he had then quitted, she saw at the open casement, a little boy and a very pretty young woman, dressed in a style so uncommon and tasteful, that Emily felt convinced that she was French. About half a mile down another bye-road was a small farm house, inhabited by a tenant of General De Cardonnell. Emily, turning her horse that way, called to see the farmer's wife, who received her with much bustle and satisfaction. After the usual civil preliminary inquiries had been interchanged, Emily said, “ I see you have got a new neighbour at Jenkins's cottage ? Do you know who she is ? ”

“ Not I, truly, ma’am !” said the good dame, tossing her head disdainfully. “ I know nothing about *sich loike*, I ’ll assure you.”

“ Why what sort of person is she, then, Mrs. Goodwin ?”

“ Why, ma’am, they do say that she ’s a kept mistress, (saving your presence, ma’am,) and sure enough she ’s some outlandish body, and no better nor she should be.”

“ She *is* a foreigner is she ?”

“ Sure enough, ma’am ; she speaks nothing but French gibberish and broken English *loike*. She’s a hussey, I ’ll warrant her.”

“ But why should you think so, Mrs. Goodwin ?”

“ Why, ma’am, there ’s a grand gentleman, him as they say keeps her, and tuik the house for her, that comes constant to see her ; and sure enough he ’s a beautiful man as ever I set my eyes on,—a real grand man he is to luik at, just like a prince ; more shame till him to take up with such trumpery as her ! And they do say he comes from foreign parts too ; howsomever, he does not belong here, no how ; and I reckon they cam’ together.”

“ And does no one but this gentleman go to see this young woman ?”

“ No, ma’am, nobody goes nigh hand her but just him.”

“ And does she live quite alone ? Is there not

an old man who lives in the same cottage?" asked Emily.

"Not that I know on, ma'am. There's *nobbut* a bit lass came with her, that takes care on the child, and cleans the house."

"Do you know her name?"

"I've hard it, but I cannot mind it enow,—it's a queer neame. Jemmy," said she to a red haired boy that just then stumped into the kitchen, and at the sight of Miss De Cardonnell stood stock still, staring and gaping and making his rustic bow and scrape, "Jemmy! dost know the neame of the outlandish body,—her as lives at Jenkins's?"

"The lass as leeves with her, caws her summit loike Mumsel Powlen," said the boy, scratching his head.

Emily tried to question the boy further; but he was so confounded and abashed at being addressed by such a grand lady, that she could make nothing of him. But his mother elicited, that he had once been sent an errand with a letter from *Mumsel Powlen*, to the grand gentleman at the inn, and he had never *hard tell* of any old man, and did not believe any lived there.

Finding that the good woman knew nothing more on the subject, Emily left the house, absorbed in thought. She recollected with indignation his declaration that he had been at the cottage to see an old man,

whereas it now appeared that his visit was really to a pretty girl. She could not doubt that this Mademoiselle Pauline, was the same French girl with the child, who had followed him to Esthwaite Court, on the day of the ball, and the same whom he had rode, the following morning, through a torrent of rain, to see before his departure for Keswick. She remembered his embarrassment, when Dr. Doran accidentally saw the memorandum respecting "Pauline," in his pocket book, and when he learnt that Pauline's letter had fallen into her hands. And now that her suspicions were awakened, his refusal to attend Carlisle races, or to accompany Mr. Wentworth's family into Yorkshire,—his choice of the obscure little inn at Coniston to live at, doubtless to be near to Pauline, and a hundred other corroborating circumstances, rushed into her mind, and seemed to bring irresistible proof of his guilt.

If his connexion with her were really accidental, or innocent, or honourable, or purely benevolent, whence his confusion? Why have recourse to concealment and falsehood? Yet he seemed, on the preceding morning, to be on the point of communicating something relative to Pauline. What could he—what would he—have said? Perhaps he could satisfactorily explain the whole matter; and some reason or necessity might exist for concealment. And again her mind revolted from the belief that he could be the base, heartless seducer he appeared. No! She would at least suspend her judge-

ment. She would not condemn him unheard. She would believe him innocent till he was proved to be guilty.

On her way back, Emily called to see Nurse Martha, the good old nurse whose care had fostered the infancy of herself and all her brothers and sisters, and who now lived in a neat cottage, given her by General De Cardonnell, about a hundred yards out of the village. From the gossip of her nurse, she soon found that Count Waldemar, whom Martha knew perfectly well, was the person who had hired the cottage for the French girl and her child, and who visited her there; and it was universally reported in the country, that she had followed him from France, where he had abandoned her and her child.

Emily was shocked by hearing this confirmation of her worst suspicions. On her return home, she communicated all she had heard, and all that had previously occurred, to Mrs. De Cardonnell, whose astonishment equalled her own; and who thought the circumstances admitted no other possible explanation than that Pauline was the mistress of Count Waldemar.

Mrs. De Cardonnell's curiosity to see her, and if possible to ascertain the exact truth, was great; and the next morning she proposed to Emily to drive her in her pony-chaise in that direction. Accident favoured their purpose; for in returning, as they passed the cottage, the little boy ran out, attracted by the

sound of the wheels, exclaiming,—“Voilà la jolie voiture, maman ! Voilà le petit chien !” And in trying to catch a little terrier that was rather in advance of the vehicle, the child ran across the road, exactly in front of the horse, and almost close to it :—but they were going slowly ; Mrs. De Cardonnell instantly pulled up, Emily jumped out, stopped the child, and all danger was over, at the very moment that the young woman flying out distractedly into the road, cried, “O mon enfant ! mon enfant !”

Mrs. De Cardonnell said a few words to reassure her in French, adding “Apparemment vous êtes Française ?”

“Mon Dieu !” exclaimed the girl, clasping her hands,—“Madame parle François ! Que j’ai de plaisir à entendre encore ma propre langue.”

Mrs. De Cardonnell then said,—“Y-a-t-il donc long tems que vous ne l’avez entendu ? Ne connoissez vous personne dans ce pays-ci qui parle Français ?”

“Ah oui ! un Monsieur, le seul que je connoisse ici. Il parle Français toujours ; car, je ne puis pas parler Anglais ; il n’y a que quelques semaines que je suis en Angleterre.”

“Puis-je demander quel est votre nom ?”

“Pauline,—pour vous servir.”

“Comment s’appelle votre enfant ?” said Emily.

“Henri.”

“Henri ! Et son père, s’appelle-t-il Henri aussi ?”

“Oui, mademoiselle, le même. Mon fils s'appelle comme son père; mais son père n'est pas Français. Hélas! j'oublie que je ne dois pas en parler!”

“Et pourquoi pas?”

“Parceque j'ai promis de ne jamais prononcer son nom. J'ai promis jamais de reveler les torts qu'il a envers moi!”

Pauline, however, with French volubility, poured forth the story of her wrongs, and told how she had been deceived and betrayed by this rich and noble foreigner in France,—how, by a false assurance of marriage, she had been led to suppose herself his wife,—how in token of it he had given her a ring, and also a locket with his hair, which she shewed them, and which was exactly the colour of Count Waldemar's hair,—and how at last he had abruptly abandoned her. But hearing that he had gone to England, she had followed him to London, and from London to this neighbourhood, where he was on a visit, she said, at a grand château. She told them his desertion had nearly broken her heart. He had now, however, settled a liberal provision upon herself and child; but it was upon the sole condition, that his name and connexion with her should never be revealed. If she ever betrayed it, her annuity was instantly to be forfeited. Nay, she added, that even if his name were to be mentioned to her, she was bound to deny it.

“But surely,” Emily said, “you would not deny the truth?”

“ Alas !” she said, “ what will not a mother do for her child ? Mais, je ne dois pas vous dire ces choses, Madame,” she added, recollecting herself ; “ cependant vous paroissez si bonne et si douce.”

“ Jeune infortunée ! Je vous plains du fond de mon cœur !”

“ Ah, madame ! Si vous connoissiez mon histoire ! Mais, hélas ! je n’ ose pas vous le dire !”

“ Je ne le desire pas. Je ne veux pas pénétrer votre secret. Mais si vous le pouvez repondre seulement à une question—votre sèducteur, le père de votre enfant, est-il ici ? Je veux dire, dans ce voisinage ?”

“ It était chez un certain Monsieur qui demeure dans un grand chateau, dans ce voisinage ; c’est pourquoi je l’ai suivi jusqu’ici. Mais, maintenant, il est parti pour quelques jours.”

“ Ah ! c’est assez !”

“ Cependant, Madame, il reviendra bientôt.”

“ Je le sais—ce n’est que trop vrai ! Bon Dieu ! tant de sceleratesse, peut-elle exister !” But restraining her indignation, she called to Emily, who had stood like a statue by the side of the carriage. “ Allons, ma chère, il faut que nous nous allions. Bon jour, Pauline ; ne manquez pas de vous adresser à moi si vous avez besoin de quelque chose, ou si vous êtes dans l’embarras. J’aurai bien de plaisir à vous offrir tous les secours en mon pouvoir.”

“ Ah, madame ! comment vous remercier !” exclaimed Pauline, as they drove away.

Amazement and indignation at the discovery of Count Waldemar's baseness, and compassion for the young and interesting victim of his crimes, which filled their minds, at first seemed too strong for utterance. "To think that he could have the heart deliberately to deceive and desert her;—to leave her to poverty and solitude, and sorrow and shame," exclaimed Emily. "And she looks so sweet and innocent!—What a villain he must be!"

"A villain indeed, and the worst of villains!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell—"a deceitful villain! One would have thought it incredible that a man so young, and apparently so noble-minded, should be so abandoned to depravity, and such an adept in duplicity!—How we have been deceived in him!"

"After this, in whom can we place any trust?" said Emily.

"In the friends we have tried, and of whose honour and rectitude we have had proof, Emily! This discovery only serves to shew how inefficient are all the resources of artifice and dissimulation to conceal the real character. The truth invariably, sooner or later, comes to light. After all, we have only known Count Waldemar a few weeks. All his talents, and specious, seeming, and consummate duplicity, have not enabled him to impose upon us longer."

"Have we really known him so short a time?" said Emily.

"There is one thing only which perplexes me,"

said Mrs. De Cardonnell, musing. "Pauline said the child was called Henri after his father, and Count Waldemar's name is Conrad."

"Conrad *Henry* Ernest Waldemar," said Emily. "Henry, I know, is his second name. You may see it written in the books he lent us."

After their return, Emily rambled along by the lake side. The rich glow of the western sky tempted her to remain out, to enjoy the beauty of the autumnal evening. Clouds bathed in varying hues of more than earthly splendour, were shedding their crimson and golden glory over the placid waters of the lake. Insensibly she wandered onwards, contemplating this glorious spectacle, and absorbed in thought, till at last the fast gathering shades of evening roused her attention; and looking round, she found herself at a considerable distance from home. She immediately turned back, without however feeling the smallest apprehension, being certain of meeting with no molestation from the peaceful rustics of Coniston; and again her thoughts reverted to Count Waldemar and Pauline. But she was suddenly roused from her reverie, by a rude voice calling out, "How now, my pretty dear? How d'ye do?" And looking up, she beheld a little fat impudent-looking man, flourishing a switch in his hand, his hat stuck on one side of his head, and his face very red, as if with drinking, standing a few paces before her in the narrow path, and

holding out his arms as if determined to intercept her passage. There was no means of escape ; a cliff, almost perpendicular, bounded one side of the path, and the lake the other. Collecting, therefore, her courage, and assuming a calmness she did not feel, she desired him in a tone of dignity and command, to let her pass.

“ Let you pass, my pretty one ! ” said he. “ So I will. But you must pay toll first, damme ! Come give me a kiss, that ’s a dear ! ”

“ Stand off, sir ! ” exclaimed Emily, indignantly, “ and instantly let me pass ! ”—Overawed by the dignity of her air, the little man stopped short ; and Emily, profiting by his momentary hesitation, instantly darted past him, with a celerity which eluded his grasp, and a swiftness which mocked his pursuit. But his companion, who had been following him at some distance, now appeared advancing towards her, and called out, “ Not so fast, my dear—not so fast ! Don’t be in such a hurry, we must not part so soon.”

Hastily turning round, she perceived her first tormentor in full chace behind her. Thus placed between them, with an agility which terror only could have inspired, she seized an overhanging branch of a tree, and aided by it, sprung up the broken perpendicular cliff which rose from the lake ; but her gown was caught by the tangled briars, and before she could break through them, her first pursuer, panting and blowing, came up with her, and seizing hold of her dress, triumphantly exclaimed, “ So ! I have caught

you at last, you little runaway, have I ? You shan't escape me now !”

At that moment a well known voice struck her ear from above, exclaiming, “ Villain ! Stand off !” and Count Waldemar, breaking through the thick bushes and underwood, which alone afforded him footing, sprung down the precipitous face of the cliff upon the path, seized the little wretch by the collar, and shaking him violently, with one jerk of his athletic arm, whirled him into the lake.

The other man, taking warning by the fate of his associate, turned round and took to his heels with the utmost precipitation.

Count Waldemar never even cast a look upon them ; his whole attention was directed to Miss De Cardonnell, whom, pale and trembling, he supported in his arms, with the most respectful solicitude, while accents of murmured tenderness, and smothered execrations against the wretches who had presumed to insult her, broke involuntarily from his lips. At first she was unable to stand or to speak ; but soon extricating herself from his support, and motioning towards the little man who was floundering about in the water, unable to get out, she with difficulty articulated “ He will be drowned !”

Count Waldemar looked round and saw him nearly chin deep, vainly essaying to emerge from the frigid flood. Three times did he labour to extricate himself, and three times the treacherous bank giving way, was

he plunged in again deeper than before. Seeing him thoroughly soused, Count Waldemar extended the end of a broken bough to him, and with its assistance the half drowned little wretch scrambled out, and stood upon the bank, shaking in every limb, his clothes streaming with water, and his teeth chattering in his head from the conjoined effects of cold and fear, while rage for some moments choked his utterance. At length he stammered out, "What do you mean, sir? Damn me, sir—what do you mean by such usage?—Tossing one into the lake when one's as hot as hell! Why it may be the death of me, sir!"

"No insolence! Walk off instantly, unless you wish to be tossed in again?" said Count Waldemar.

"Insolence indeed!" said the little man, trying to look big, but evidently quaking with fear, and prudently getting to a safer distance. "Do you know who I am, sir?"

"Yes! I know you to be a contemptible coward, base enough to insult a woman. Be gone, sir!"

"Coward, sir!—I would have you to know that I'm a person of consequence—I'm a knight, sir—no less! Sir Jeffrey Jollope, sir—knighted by his most gracious majesty, for carrying up the address from Rotherham."

"You may be a knight," said Count Waldemar, "but you certainly are not a gentleman."

"Not a gentleman! Damn me, sir, I say I *am* a gentleman, sir; and I'll—I'll have satisfaction."

"The satisfaction of a caning you should certainly

have instantly," said Count Waldemar, surveying him with ineffable contempt, "if the presence of this lady——"

"Sir, that lady——"

"Breathe a syllable respecting that lady, sir," said the Count, fiercely advancing to him, "dare but to name her, and I 'll break every bone in your body :—begone, Sir, this instant ; no reply, begone instantly ! If you have any thing further to say to me, you will find me at the inn in an hour's time."

Intimidated by his looks, and no way disposed again to feel the vigour of his arm, the little man instantly shrunk off, muttering and complaining all the way as he went, but taking care to keep his voice in so low a key that it should not reach the ears of his terrific foe.

Emily, who had vainly attempted to interfere during this altercation between Count Waldemar and the little quaking knight, now almost overcome with contending emotions, at the thought of having been exposed to such an insult, and apprehensions for the consequences of the quarrel ; unable to stand, would have sunk upon the bank, had not Count Waldemar supported her in his arms.

Shocked at her extreme paleness and agitation, he hung over her, unable to repress his feelings of respect and tenderness for her, and of smothered indignation against the contemptible wretch who had caused her distress.

“Then treat him with the contempt he deserves!—take no notice of him,” said Emily, with earnestness, exerting herself to regain her self-possession, and dreading beyond expression a duel.

“Do not waste a thought upon him,” said Count Waldemar, “he is utterly beneath your notice.”

“And beneath your resentment,” said Emily; and she endeavoured to exact a promise from Count Waldemar, not to provoke a renewal of the quarrel.

“Certainly not,” said the Count, anxious to remove her uneasiness. “But do not think of him. If you are really able,” seeing her about to go, “allow me to attend you home,” and he drew her arm within his. The recollection of Pauline, which terror and agitation had hitherto banished, at this moment rushed into her mind, and hastily withdrawing her arm with a look of anger and disdain which riveted him to the spot, she began with a quick though unassured pace to walk from him towards home.

Amazement at so sudden and unaccountable a change for some moments seemed to paralyze his senses; but hastily following her, he again respectfully offered his arm, and in a tone which betrayed how deeply his feelings were wounded, he asked if she would not deign to accept a support she so much needed; but she haughtily refused.

It was quite dusk: but there was still light enough for him to see the altered expression of her coun-

tenance, in which he read only coldness and disdain. He walked by her side for some minutes in silence, while feelings of amazement, mortification, and wounded pride, struggled in his breast.

The reflections of neither were of the most agreeable nature. A repulse so instantaneous and so decisive;—a change so marked and unaccountable;—a single glance—a moment, had produced so complete a revulsion through his whole frame, that his feelings were most acutely painful: and Emily, though her heart was filled with grief and indignation at the remembrance of Pauline's wrongs and of his baseness, was dissatisfied with herself. She felt that whatever might have been his faults to others, his conduct to herself, from the beginning of their acquaintance, had uniformly been such as to merit her highest consideration and regard; and that, more especially, under the trying circumstances in which she had just been placed; his spirited defence—his honourable protection—his profound respect, and his devoted attention, entitled him to her warmest gratitude, not to her scorn and anger. She considered that he could not know, nor could she tell him, the cause of her abrupt change of manner, which he must necessarily impute to the most causeless caprice. Yet she could make no apology; for she could neither explain the past, nor atone for it in future by treating him as she had formerly done. At last he said, as they were approaching the house, in a tone in which strong but

subdued emotion was mingled with some feeling of wounded pride, "Before we part, Miss De Cardonnell, will you not tell me in what I have been so unfortunate as to offend you, that I may, if possible, atone for it?"

"You have not offended me," said Emily, colouring and hesitating.

"How then can I have incurred your marked displeasure and contempt?"

Emily blushed deeply, and in great embarrassment, acknowledged that she felt her conduct must appear to him perfectly unaccountable and capricious,—“but”——. She hesitated and stopped short.

"I know that you are incapable of caprice," he said with great earnestness. "Tell me then what is it I have done to merit your indignation and contempt?"

She was silent; but distressing confusion agitated her countenance.

"I see that I have offended you past forgiveness," he said.

"O no, no!" she exclaimed, "Indeed you have not offended me—on the contrary, I owe you nothing but gratitude."

"Gratitude!" he exclaimed impatiently. "Good God! I must indeed have sinned past all hope of forgiveness, since you talk to me of *gratitude*, and in that cold, constrained manner! Will you not even tell me my offence, unconscious and involuntary as it is?"

She hesitated, and with painful embarrassment at

last uttered, "I cannot;—I—I know that I must have appeared capricious, rude, ungrateful,—but I cannot explain—" and she broke off in confusion, nor could his urgent entreaties draw from her the truth.

They were now at the house door, and in order to keep him out of the way of Sir Jeffrey Jollope, she asked him to go in, but she found it impossible to detain him; and in answer to her strongly expressed apprehensions of the consequences of his meeting with the man, he said, "Fear nothing! With such a poltroon, nothing can happen." But this was precisely the point upon which Emily did not share his indifference and security. She thought that however averse to it, the little knight, after what had passed, could not possibly avoid fighting, more especially after his magnanimous declaration that he would have satisfaction: and satisfaction, she felt perfectly certain, Count Waldemar was not the man to refuse even to him.

Trembling for the consequences, Emily instantly sought her mother, and briefly communicated her disagreeable adventure and her fears. Mrs. De Cardonnell saw that her apprehensions were too well grounded, and could not help regretting, that she herself was not, for the time being, a man and a justice of the peace. She, however, immediately determined to despatch the old, steady, sagacious butler, on whose discretion she could rely, to the inn—the expected scene of action,—accompanied by the village

constable, to watch the proceedings of the belligerents, with private directions, if necessary, timely to interfere and keep the peace in the king's name.

The time of the butler's absence seemed endless to Emily, whose suspense was at length terminated by his return, and the very first sight of his countenance sufficiently proved that mirth, not mischief, had been the issue of the fray. The butler, usually the most serious of men, was utterly unable to keep his gravity while he related the scene which had taken place. He said, that when he had reached the inn with the constable, he learnt from Count Waldemar's servant, that his master, immediately on entering the house, had sent him into the room where "the two lakers" were sitting, with his card and an enquiry whether Sir Jeffrey Jollope (if that was the name of the person he had thrown into the lake,) had any message to send to him.

But Sir Jeffrey Jollope, who had just got on dry clothes, and was regaling himself with some hot brandy and water, took some time to cogitate what answer to send; and no answer had been sent when the butler arrived.

The parlour occupied by Count Waldemar was on one side of the door of the little inn, and that by the "lakers" on the other: and the two domestics stationing themselves upon a seat immediately under the window of the latter, had the benefit of overhearing all that passed between them, as the casement was

partially open. Sir Jeffrey's friend kept exhorting him to behave with proper spirit, and make this French Count make him an apology ; but the knight, whose valour like Acres's, had oozed out of his fingers' ends into the water, continued to walk irresolutely about the room, declaring he did not believe the French Count would make him any apology, if he demanded it ever so.

"Then call him out. Damme you *must* call him out, Sir Jeffrey : you never can shew your face again in gentlemen's society after putting up with such an affront.—Damme, I wish he had thrown *me* into the lake."

"I wish he had !" ejaculated Sir Jeffrey.

"I would have shewn him the difference," continued his friend.

At length, urged by these taunts and exhortations, the knight took courage, and several glasses of brandy, and reluctantly sallied forth, backed by his friend, to demand an apology. Having been formally announced, he barely ventured in at the door, completely obstructing the entrance of his friend, who was close behind him, a fact he took care to ascertain by looking back over his shoulder. Twisting and fumbling about a bit of switch, and looking very frightened and foolish, the knight seemed utterly at a loss what to say :—at last, in answer to the Count's haughty question—"What were his demands?" he stammered out—"I hope, sir—Count—that you will please to make me an apology."

“An apology!” said the Count. “And for what, pray?”

“For throwing me into the lake,” said the little knight.

“It was not half punishment enough for such a poltroon as you,” said the Count.

“There! you hear he calls you a poltroon,” whispered the friend at his back, “you can’t put up with that!”

“No, I can’t put up with that!” repeated Sir Jeffrey, in a great flurry and trepidation, not knowing what he was saying, and twisting the switch in his fingers with redoubled vigour. “Good Lord! what shall I do?”

“Tell him he must give you satisfaction.”

“You—you must—that is—I hope, sir, you’ll give me satisfaction.”

“By all means: this moment if you like,” said the Count, coolly; “the sooner the better.”

Sir Jeffrey hemmed and coughed and hesitated.

“Damn me! What are you shirking about, Sir Jeffrey? Name your time and place, like a man! You *must* call him out,” whispered the friend. “Damme, if he had called *me* a poltroon, I would have knocked him down.”

“Would you?” said the Count, overhearing him, and instantly advancing to the door, which he threw wide open. “And pray who are you? Walk in, sir,—pray walk in. If I mistake not, you are the person who ran away so nimbly, when I tossed your

companion into the lake?" No answer. "And you would knock me down, you say, if I were to call you a poltroon?—'Then I do call you a poltroon; and a complete poltroon you must be, to stand by and see a woman insulted."

The man—who, although he had a bigger body, did not seem to have a soul one whit bigger than that of the little knight,—tried in vain to bluster, and stammered out "Damme, sir, what d'ye mean. I don't understand such language."

"Then I'll use a language that you shall understand," said the Count, hastily advancing, while the little man and the big man both instinctively retreated to the door; and Sir Jeffrey, defending himself with his switch, exclaimed—"If you assault us, mind we'll bring an action against you! We'll have damages."

Count Waldemar, surveying them with ineffable contempt, said, "Your insignificance alone prevents me from giving both of you the chastisement you deserve. But you are beneath my resentment, for, I repeat it, you are both cowards—cowards base enough to insult a woman, and endure insult from a man."

The big man muttered something between his teeth.

"What was that you said, sir?" said the Count, fiercely.

"Nothing, sir, nothing;" said the big man, in a fright.

“Then I say, and I repeat it, that both of you are cowards and poltroons, and beneath the notice of a gentleman.”

“And I don’t regard none of your impertinence, sir,” said the big man, trying to pluck up a little spirit.

“Impertinence, you rascal!” exclaimed the Count, seizing him by the collar, and shaking him till he could not stand, and then throwing him from him with such force that he fell against the opposite wainscot, where the Count unmercifully belaboured his bones with his riding whip. “How dare you call me impertinent, you scoundrel!”

“Let him go! Let him go, I say!” said Sir Jeffrey Jollope, waxing valorous at the odds of two to one, and venturing to seize the Count’s arm from behind.

Count Waldemar turned short round; his eye flashed fire; with one blow he levelled his insignificant assailant to the ground, where he abundantly bestowed upon him, in turn, the manual chastisement he so richly merited.

At last the two discomfited heroes got upon their legs again, looking rueful and crest-fallen in the highest degree.

“Now,” said Count Waldemar, coolly, “I am ready to give either, or both of you *satisfaction*.”

There was no answer, excepting indistinct muttering and grumbling.

“ Then am I to understand, *gentlemen*,” said the Count, with a most contemptuous emphasis upon the latter word, “ that you have nothing further to say to me ?”—He paused.—“ No further commands or demands ?” Another pause,—neither had a word to offer. “ Then, *gentlemen*, there is the door ; please to walk off instantly ; unless you wish me to shew you a shorter way out.”

They did not wait for a repetition of the hint, but looking very foolish and sheepish, they hurried out of the room ; and fortifying themselves with another glass of brandy each, without even stopping to eat the supper which they had ordered and for which they had to pay, they got into their gig, and set off in the dark, amidst the sneers, jokes, and laughter of the waiters, chambermaids, ostlers, stable boys, rustics, and gentlemen’s servants assembled at the inn door ; most of whom profiting by the open window and door of Count Waldemar’s parlour, and the loud tone in which the altercation was carried on, had heard and seen all that had passed.

But the final issue of the disastrous adventures of these worthies, was not known till the following day, when news arrived, that, probably in consequence of the copious potations of brandy they had swallowed before setting out, they had contrived to overturn their gig in a deep ditch, from which the knight contrived to crawl, nearly suffocated with mud ; with one eye nearly knocked out, his nose broken, and his jaws

and head wofully battered and bruised ; while his companion, having put his ancle out of joint, was compelled to lie in the ditch, in a plight still more miserable ; for the little man was wholly unable to drag the great man out. No help nor human habitation was to be found on the bleak heights on which the accident happened. The horse had run away with the wreck of the broken gig, so the unlucky knight was compelled to make the best of his way on foot to Hawkeshead ; but the people of the little inn there were all in bed and asleep, and when at last he succeeded in rousing them, he “ came in such a questionable shape,” that, supposing him to be a drunken vagabond, they refused him admittance, and inexorably shut the window in his face. His rage at this treatment knew no bounds, and finding his knocks, oaths, menaces, and uproar were totally disregarded, he began to pelt the windows with stones ; at which the people of the inn sallied forth, armed with sticks, and began to belabour him without mercy. Rage choked his utterance, so that it was not easily or speedily, and not until he had got a sound drubbing, that he made them understand or believe who he was. Thus it was his fate twice in the same evening to be soundly beaten. At last they took him in, and put him to bed ; but it was not till day-light that his hapless companion was brought into the house in a cart, having lain the entire night in the wet ditch, from the knight’s drunken or stupid

inability to explain where the accident had happened.

Dr. Doran, who was called in to attend these battered heroes, brought the first account of their disaster to Coniston Hall.

CHAPTER XII.

ESTRANGEMENT.

“ — Rumour is a pipe,
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,
And of so easy and so plain a stop,
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads
Can play upon it.”

SHAKSPEARE.

LORD ARDENTOWER called at Coniston Hall the next morning, and while he was still listening to Mrs. De Cardonnell's account of Emily's adventure and rescue the preceding evening, Count Waldemar passed the window. Unable to encounter a meeting with him, Emily hastily left the room. Lord Ardentower's keen glance followed her. “ Now, is that affectation, coquetry, consciousness, or love ? ” thought he. Count Waldemar himself had caught a glimpse of her through the window, and at his entrance he looked disappointed at the seat she had quitted.

Lord Ardentower rallied him upon his chivalrous exploit. “ But pray explain, Count,” he added, “ how you happened to start up so opportunely to the

succour of a distressed damsel and the discomfiture of a discourteous knight on the banks of Coniston Water, when you were supposed to be buried in the wilds of Wast Dale? How came you to be so romantically ready to hurl the base caitiff into the lake? Did some good genius transport you through the clouds, and drop you down upon the spot?"

"Even so," said Count Waldemar, with a smile, "I certainly did come through the clouds and drop down upon the spot; for the high hills which I crossed in my way from Wast Dale were all enveloped in clouds; so that I was probably led by some good genius, as your Lordship suggests, to the top of the cliff, from whence I dimly descried, by the lake side, Miss De Cardonnell, and the insignificant little wretch who presumed to oppose her passage, and therefore of course I 'dropped down' to her assistance."

"And did you actually get down the face of that perpendicular cliff?" asked Mrs. De Cardonnell, with surprise.

"The bushes and inequalities of the crags supported me and afforded me footing," said Count Waldemar. "I was at the bottom in a moment."

"I don't doubt that,—I only wonder you did not stay there, in consequence of breaking your neck. Why it seems an impossibility!"

"O but he trampled upon impossibilities," said Lord Ardentower, "like a true hero of romance! From the top of the cliff, he beheld Miss De Cardon-

nell's situation, madly threw himself from his horse, burst through the thickets, and sprang headlong down the rocky precipice, to the deliverance of the lady and the overthrow of the recreant knight ;—a perfect Don Quixote !—Although Count, your prowess transformed *him*, not yourself, into ‘ the Knight of the Rueful Countenance.’ What would I not have given to have seen him emerge from the water, like a half drowned rat ! Still I do not understand how you happened to return so soon.”

Count Waldemar said, “ that he had soon seen all he wished of Wast Dale ; and as Dr. Doran had not amassed half enough specimens, and had besides picked up a patient there, a Mr. Satterthwaite, who had been taken suddenly ill, his return seemed uncertain. So leaving him hammering in happiness among the rocks,” continued the Count, “ I mounted my horse, and made the best of my way back—”

“ ‘ And heaven-directed, came that *way* to do
The happy deed that gilds your *noble* name,’ ”

said Lord Ardentower.

“ *Gilds*,” repeated Mrs. De Cardonnell, somewhat sarcastically. “ If Count Waldemar requires *gilding*, it would seem that he is base metal only—not sterling gold—”

Count Waldemar coloured at the tone in which this was said.

“ You have convicted me of arrant nonsense, cer-

tainly," said Lord Ardentower, laughing. "To *gild* a *noble* name, would indeed be

‘ To gild refined gold,
And add a perfume to the violet.’

And therefore, most noble Count, this deed will *not* gild your name, simply because your name requires no gilding. But I must be gone. Count, I will trouble you not to forget that you promised to come to us on Saturday, when I expect the ladies from hence, and the party from Carlisle races back again. But by the way, I wish you would come to-morrow, and stay till Monday, for I expect some men whom I know you will like. I must have you. You *can* have no engagement, therefore come."

Count Waldemar agreed to dine there next day, but declined staying longer; a circumstance not lost upon Mrs. De Cardonnell, who attributed it to Pauline, while Lord Ardentower ascribed it to the attractions of Miss De Cardonnell.

Count Waldemar still lingered after Lord Ardentower's departure; and from the frequent glances he cast at the door, he seemed to be expecting Miss De Cardonnell's re-entrance. Absent and thoughtful, he did not for some time perceive the marked coldness and distance of Mrs. De Cardonnell's manner. At length he seemed struck with it, and at once, with earnestness, inquired the cause.

The answer of Mrs. De Cardonnell immediately

led him to suppose that some reports had reached her, injurious to his character ; and he anxiously enquired who was the secret enemy that had succeeded in robbing him of her good opinion.

“ No ‘ secret enemy,’ Count Waldemar—none but yourself could have altered my opinion of you. No artful accusation—no doubtful evidence could have shaken my confidence in you, or induced me to have believed you capable of unworthy conduct.”

“ And do you believe me capable of unworthy conduct ?” he asked, as his cheek flushed and his eye flashed with indignant pride.

Mrs. De Cardonnell fixed upon him her penetrating glance, as if she would have read his very soul. “ I cannot doubt it,” she said. “ I have had incontrovertible proof of it.”

“ Proof !—impossible ! Of what ?—Of what is it that I am accused ?”

“ Of having seduced and betrayed unsuspecting, unprotected innocence !”

“ By Heaven ’tis false !—By all that is sacred—”

“ Stop !” exclaimed Mrs. De Cardonnell, starting from her seat. “ Do not swear !—For heaven’s sake do not add perjury to guilt !—Denial is vain. I know every thing. I know that Pauline was—nay is your mistress ;—that she ought to have been your wife ; and that she followed you to this country, where she still continues under your protection. I know that you took the cottage for her, and that you alone visit

her there.”——She paused. But he stood as if petrified.

“ I know also,” she said, “ that Pauline went to you at Esthwaite Court on the morning of the ball ; and I believe that you rode through that torrent of rain the next morning to see her before we went to Keswick.” She paused again. “ You cannot deny it, Count Waldemar.”

“ Good Heavens !” he exclaimed, “ in what a situation am I placed ! To be suspected of such guilt without the power of vindicating myself !”

“ Without the power !” repeated Mrs. De Cardonnell, incredulously ; “ and what, if you are not guilty, can possibly deprive you of the *power* of vindicating yourself ? Your character imperiously demands that you should clear yourself from such an imputation, if you can.”——He was silent.

“ What am I to think, Count Waldemar ? Can you justify yourself ?”

“ I cannot.”

“ Then you acknowledge it is true ?”

“ No !——it is false ! I am innocent ; but I cannot prove my innocence.”

“ I am as ready to believe your innocence, as I was reluctant to admit your guilt. Only speak ! Explain yourself ! Do not fancy that I will not believe you because you cannot bring forward incontrovertible proofs of the truth of what you assert. Tell me the simple facts.”

“ I cannot !” said Count Waldemar. A long pause ensued ; at last he said, “ I see I have for ever lost the good opinion with which you honoured me ;—lost it, without a fault of my own—without the possibility of ever regaining it ; for I cannot prove myself to be innocent of this charge, nor even justify myself, without being guilty of baseness which would degrade me for ever in my own eyes. No ! highly as I value your esteem, I value my own still higher.”

“ What is it you mean ?” exclaimed Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ If any secret—any mystery is involved in this affair, you may safely trust to me. Only tell me the truth ?”

He shook his head in despair.

“ You cannot !—Is it then not true that you knew Pauline in France ?—That you left her there ?—That she followed you, and found you out at Esthwaite Court ?—That you took the cottage for her ?—And that you still, and you only, visit her there ?—Are these things not true ?—Can you deny them ?”

“ I cannot,” he said in a tone of despair.

“ And do you then deny that you are the seducer of Pauline ?”

“ It is vain for me to deny it, because I cannot disprove it,” he said. “ But Pauline herself would deny it.”

“ Yes, I am aware of that !” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, with inexpressible contempt. “ Pauline *must* deny it. Upon her secrecy depends the con-

tinuance of the provision wrung for her solely by the fear of exposure."

The burning blood rushed into his face. "Great God! must I bear this!" he exclaimed, starting up indignantly—"I see it all—too late. My own infatuated folly has been my ruin. Fool! madman that I was!" And he rushed out of the room.

When Mrs. De Cardonnell repeated the particulars of this interview to Emily, she said, "Nothing gave me so bad an opinion of him as the meanness and art of his appeal to Pauline herself, when he knew that he himself had bound her not to reveal the truth—nay, even to deny it—both by a solemn promise, and by the threat of losing the provision for herself and child if she did. He seemed not to feel the smallest sorrow or repentance for the crime itself—only for its detection; but its discovery seemed to throw him into a state little short of distraction. He execrated his own folly—guilt he should have said;—but I suppose he meant his folly in placing her in the cottage near here, by which means the truth came to light."

"Strange as it may seem," said Emily, "I can yet scarcely feel convinced of his guilt, although it appears beyond all doubt to be true. It almost seems to be a moral impossibility that he should be guilty of such monstrous depravity!"

"I cannot blame you for your incredulity," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "for I was myself ready to

catch at the least possibility of his innocence. Though how I could for a moment imagine his innocence to be possible, now excites my own wonder. But such is the power of habit and prejudice, that from having been strongly prepossessed in his favour, and accustomed to think him all that was great and good, I actually, when I saw him, almost doubted of his guilt, in spite of reason, conviction, proof positive, and Pauline herself. But he is unworthy of a thought."

"He is indeed!" said Emily, with a sigh, "and we will think of him no more."

This wise resolution Emily determined to put in practice, and to banish him from her thoughts entirely. But as some writer ingeniously observes, "*Vouloir oublier quelqu'un, c'est y penser;*" and we must, as faithful historians, candidly confess, that though she thought of Count Waldemar's baseness with amazement, grief, indignation, and even as she believed, with detestation—still she did think of him. She was angry at herself, but that only made her think of him the more. Internally too, she felt grieved, dissatisfied, and ill at ease; a frame of mind so opposite to her usual cheerful serenity and happiness of heart, that she could not but wonder what had caused the change. On consideration, however, she imputed it to the shock of the discovery of Count Waldemar's guilt, and of being so grossly deceived in

the character of one whom she had esteemed so highly.

Emily was of no temper to indulge vain regret or melancholy. And she endeavoured, by constant occupation and exertion, to shake off the painful sensations which preyed upon her mind.

To Coniston Hall Count Waldemar returned no more; but Mrs. and Miss De Cardonnell met him a few days after at Beechwood, Lord Ardentower's villa, on the day of the return of the party from Carlisle races. He looked calm and collected, but ill and out of spirits; and though he forced himself to enter into general conversation, it was evidently without his wonted interest and animation. To Mrs. De Cardonnell, whose coldness and indifference were evident through the easy politeness of her manners, he spoke with ease, and met her glance with an unaltered eye; but when obliged to address Miss De Cardonnell, his voice and countenance betrayed internal emotion, notwithstanding the guard he kept over himself.

Finding that Count Waldemar made no effort to engross her, Lord Borodale during the whole day devoted his attention to Miss De Cardonnell, to the extreme annoyance of two of the party, Miss Wentworth and the Count.

Emily was pleased with his society, and it relieved her from the painful necessity of speaking to, or even looking at Count Waldemar. She therefore

kept up an animated conversation with his Lordship, which Louisa Wentworth enviously called a violent flirtation. Nothing, however, was more remote from Emily's thoughts than flirtation or any other species of coquetry. She neither intended to charm Lord Borodale nor to torment Count Waldemar, though she effectually did both. She talked to Lord Borodale with spirit and interest, and unaffected pleasure, without any ulterior view; but she captivated him far more by her natural undesigning manners, than she could have done by the most studied attempt to charm or to shine. Lord Borodale had been so much disgusted by the little artifices and disgusting manœuvres of many fashionable young women to attract his attention, and he had been the object of so many schemes and speculations, that the animation, dignity, and natural simplicity of Emily's manners, were peculiarly agreeable to him. He plainly perceived that she had no *design upon him*; that she neither aimed at the conquest of his heart, nor the possession of his hand; and he consequently felt that respect for her character, without which neither beauty, grace, accomplishments, nor talents, could ripen admiration into love.

Louisa Wentworth's palpable and determined attacks upon the heart of Lord Borodale, had utterly failed. Her hopes had been high, that during the Carlisle races she should have achieved that brilliant conquest; because she had heard that his admiration of her

beauty had been expressed in the strongest terms, and she herself plainly perceived it. But she did not know that

“ Twas not a set of features—a complexion”

alone, that could captivate him,—that

“ Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll ;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul ;”

that, without the qualities of the mind, heart, and disposition, the affections of a man such as Lord Borodale could never be permanently engaged. She saw with ill-concealed envy, jealousy, and mortification, his growing admiration for her cousin Emily ;—who, herself regardless of it, felt most painfully her altered situation with respect to Count Waldemar. Though she sedulously avoided looking at him, she *felt*, during the whole time of dinner, that he was watchfully though covertly observing her ; but she little knew the pain he experienced from witnessing Lord Borodale’s attentions to her, and the apparent pleasure with which she received them. She little suspected the anguish of heart which was proudly concealed beneath the calmness of his outward deportment !

The following day they met again at dinner at her aunt, Lady Melmoth’s. His manners to Miss De Cardonnell were invariably calm, polite, distant, and respectful. He made no attempt to engage her in conversation ; but when she moved, his eyes involun-

tarily followed her ; when she sang, he placed himself where he could gaze upon her, although she could not observe him : and he listened to her with rapt attention, although never, even by a word, did he express the pleasure her performance evidently gave him, or join in the general applause with which it was received.

To Emily, however, with esteem for his character, all the pleasure she had formerly felt in his society was at an end ; and it was now painful to her to meet with him—painful to her to speak with distant politeness and cold constraint to one with whom she had been accustomed to converse with unrestrained ease and confidence, and for whom she still felt a deep interest and admiration which she vainly struggled to subdue ; yet convinced of his unworthiness, his wit, his talents, his taste, his boundless store of knowledge, and his fascinating manners, had lost their power to charm.

She could not

“ Love the offender, yet detest the offence ;”

but neither could she hate or despise him, or even forget him—as she thought she ought to do. She tried hard, but in vain : it would not do. She never failed to think of his guilt when absent, with virtuous indignation and abhorrence ; but she found it impossible, in his presence, not to admire and even respect him. With the quiet dignity of his manner there was a degree of self-respect, and an air of suffer-

ing under unmerited injustice that surprised Emily, for it seemed incompatible with the consciousness of guilt. But of his guilt there could be no doubt, since Pauline had avowed and he could not deny it: and she only wondered why she did not despise him as he deserved.

Lord Ardentower, and even many others less quick sighted, were struck with the coldness and alienation shewn by Mrs. De Cardonnell towards him, and with the altered terms on which he and Emily evidently stood towards each other. But Lord Ardentower at once concluded that Mrs. De Cardonnell had penetrated his growing attachment to her daughter, and had determined decidedly to shew her disapprobation of it, on account of his being a foreigner.

Others supposed that her motive for so suddenly discouraging the Count was to leave the field open for Lord Borodale, who, it was observed, paid great attention to Miss De Cardonnell; and it excited no surprise that her mother should prefer the English Viscount to the foreign Count.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REGATTA.

“S’il y a un amour pur et exempt du mélange de nos autres passions, c’est celui qui est caché au fond du cœur, et que nous ignorons nous-mêmes.”

ROCHEFOUCAULT.

ADVANCED as was the season, a grand sailing match for a hundred guineas had been made between Lord Borodale’s new yacht, the *Zephyr*, Mr. Wentworth’s, the *Nautilus*, and Mr. Trevelyan’s, the *Victory*; their respective proprietors having all of them been absent during the early part of summer when the regular regatta upon Windermere took place. The yachts were to start at twelve o’clock from the pier below Lady Melmoth’s house, nearly at the bottom of the lake, and proceed up to the pier at Beechwood, within a mile or two of the head, the appointed goal. Every pleasure boat on the lake was in requisition to see and follow the race between the three great rival yachts, upon the merits of which public opinion was much divided. The weather had been very unsettled for some time past, and many were the fears, and

many were the hopes with which the barometer, and the wind, and the moon, and the clouds, and the hills, were consulted. At length,

——“ The morning dawned
And heavily in clouds brought on the day,
The great, the important day, big with the fate ”

of this momentous match. The clouds however listened to the prayers offered up to them, and very benignantly sailed away, while the sun, the glorious sun, broke forth in all his splendour.

Mrs. De Cardonnell being confined with a violent swelled face, Emily proceeded alone to Lady Melmoth's, where she found nearly the whole party assembled at the water side, full of gay anticipation, bustle, confusion, preparation, and delight:—talking, laughing, and betting, amidst the hoisting of sails, the weighing of anchors, the unfurling of flags, and the mounting of pendants. The wind, though favourable, was high, and consequently there was a considerable swell upon the lake. All the company, however, were to go on board the different yachts with the exception of Lord Ardentower, to whose gouty habit water parties in October were not adapted, and Lady Melmoth, who had never been on the lake since her son was drowned in it ten years ago. Lady Melmoth was standing alone witnessing the embarkation in a summer house built on the edge of the pier, which stretched into the water, when

as Lord Borodale was handing Emily into the yacht, she raised her head to bid her aunt adieu, and saw her suddenly turn pale as death and sink upon a seat as if nearly fainting. She flew to her, followed by the amazed Lord Borodale, whose eyes having been fixed upon her blooming countenance had not observed her aunt's pallid one, and who was unable to conjecture the cause of her sudden exclamation and flight.

Lady Melmoth however recovering, declared it was only a momentary faintness, and that she was quite well again; and she urged their immediate departure. But when Lord Borodale would have led Emily away again to the yacht, which waited for them, the same deadly paleness and tremor returned; and Emily now extorted from her aunt the reluctant confession that her faintness arose entirely from dread of some fatal accident befalling herself from the roughness of the lake.

“And did *that* apprehension make you ill?” said Emily. “Then make yourself easy, my dear aunt, for be assured I will not go.”

“Not go: impossible!” said Lord Borodale. “We cannot go without you;” and he expostulated with Lady Melmoth upon the groundlessness of her fears, assuring her there was no danger.

“No danger! Do not say so,” said Lady Melmoth. “When are these treacherous lakes devoid of danger, even in the calmest day of summer, much more when the wind and waves are as high as they now are, and

when the weather is so unsettled : when every sail too will be set regardless of danger ? Think of the dreadful catastrophe of last autumn, when the boat was lost in weather not half so boisterous as this."

" But that arose entirely from mismanagement, my dear madam," said Lord Borodale.

" And may not the same mismanagement happen again ?"

Lord Borodale interrupted her with reiterated assurances of safety, and feelingly dwelt upon the irreparable loss of pleasure to the whole party in the yacht, if Miss De Cardonnell remained behind.

" You are right, my Lord—I wish Emily to go : my terrors are foolish I know ; but she is all that is now left me in the world, and if I lose her in the same way—" and her voice faltered, and her eyes filled with tears.

Emily seeing her aunt still pale and trembling, and knowing she was subject to severe nervous attacks, again assured her of her resolution to accompany her in the carriage, and begged Lord Borodale not to detain the rest of the party any longer ; but he still exerted his utmost eloquence to shake her determination and to calm Lady Melmoth's fears,—who indeed herself urged Emily to go, saying, she could not bear to deprive her of so much pleasure.

" But it would be no pleasure to me if it made you ill and unhappy," said Emily, " and therefore I much prefer going with you."

Lord Borodale still tried to overcome her scruples, but Emily was firm in purpose though gentle in manner, and his intreaties were unsuccessful. While he still lingered, some of the party came up into the summer house and impatiently summoned them to depart.

“We should not have known where to have found you, Miss De Cardonnell,” said Lord Ardentower, “but for Miss Wentworth’s obliging and correct information—that you and Borodale were sitting *tête à tête* here, while the whole party were waiting your pleasure.”

Lord Borodale cast an indignant glance at Louisa, and Emily coloured indignantly too, for a moment; but good nature triumphed, and in excuse for her cousin’s palpable malice, she said, “Louisa I am sure did not know of my aunt’s sudden indisposition.”—

“But she knew I was here,” said Lady Melmoth, whose spirit, though meekness itself on every other occasion, could not brook this insidious attack upon her beloved niece, “for I spoke to her from the window not a minute before you ran up to me.”

“When I saw Lord Borodale and Emily go in, I thought that Lady Melmoth might have gone out,” said Louisa, vexed and disconcerted.

“A supposition equally probable and charitable,” observed Lord Ardentower apart to his son.

The persecution which poor Emily now underwent on all sides, to induce her to embark in the yacht,—

the persuading, the reasoning, the ridiculing, and the upbraiding, may easily be conceived ; but she bore it all with invincible firmness and imperturbable good humour, although she was accused by Louisa of obstinacy, perverseness, and folly, and finally of cowardice and affectation : to which she only replied with a smile, and a remark, that if the cowardice were real it could not be called affectation.

Every one else, however, did credit to her motives ; and although Lord Borodale was disappointed and mortified by the loss of her society in the yacht, he could not but admire the amiable readiness she had shewn to sacrifice her own pleasure to calm her aunt's groundless apprehensions. His words, as well as manner, expressed his sentiments ; but they were unheeded by Emily ; for at the same moment she met one momentary glance of admiring approbation, which more than repaid her : it was from Count Waldemar.

She scarcely heard Colonel Ormond, who was still pouring forth his persevering eloquence, which he deemed irresistible, to induce her to embark. To his utter astonishment, it failed, and he walked off in a pet and went on board Mr. Trevelyan's yacht, the *Victory*, with a few other kindred spirits, while the rest of the party were divided between the other yachts. Emily stood contentedly with Lord Ardentower and Lady Melmoth upon the pier, to see the rival yachts, gay with streamers and crowded with company, sail by. The guns were fired, the colours

hoisted,—acclamations rent the air—bets resounded on every side—the crews of the different vessels huzzaed,—the bands of music on board struck up their exhilarating strains—the ladies waved their white handkerchiefs, and the gentlemen their hats to the spectators on shore ; and crowding every sail

“ In gallant trim the gilded vessels go,
Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm.”

Rapidly they cut the blue and dashing waters. Lord Borodale's took the lead, Mr. Wentworth's followed, Mr. Trevelyan's was the last.

“ They promise fair, but we shall reach the goal before them,” said Lord Ardentower, as he seated himself in the landau beside Lady Melmoth and Emily.

His prediction was verified. The four gallant greys which drew their carriage, seemed to emulate the fleetness of the wind, and they stopped at Beechwood before the yachts were in sight.

“ Now I see them !” said Emily, at last. “ Now they come round the promontory !—And the Victory first !” she exclaimed, in a tone of disappointment.

“ And the poor little Zephyr last !” cried Lord Ardentower, in the same tone. “ Unlucky Borodale ! Why he must be the worst of sailors, for it is incomparably the best of yachts. But I am sorry that puppy Trevelyan should win.”

“ He may not win !—He will not win !” exclaimed

Emily. "Look! how fast the Nautilus sails!—She gains upon him! Now she comes up—Now she passes—She has won! The Wentworths have won!"

"And Trevelyan has lost!" exclaimed the Earl.

"I am so delighted!" exclaimed Emily.

"And so am I," rejoined the Earl. "But look at the Zephyr! How she sails now,—when it is too late!"

At this moment, Trevelyan and Colonel Ormond, leaping first upon the pier, and leaving all the rest of the party crowding round something on board the Zephyr, which seemed to excite general interest, came up the bank, striding very fast and laughing very loud, as if in haste to be the first to communicate some very important and interesting piece of news.

"Don't hurry yourselves, gentlemen, pray," said Lord Ardentower. "We know it; we know the Zephyr lost."

"But you don't know how, my Lord," said Colonel Ormond, "that's the best of it. The Zephyr would have won hollow; it must have won, but—ha! ha! ha! it was so completely absurd—ha! ha! ha!"

"He! he! he! it was excellent, faith!" exclaimed Trevelyan, with his coarse, loud laugh.

"'Pon my honour, it was so perfectly ridiculous!" exclaimed the Colonel, laughing violently and affectedly.

"'Pon my soul, it was the most capital joke!" echoed Trevelyan.

“O, it was admirable! it was incomparable!” exclaimed the Colonel, laughing more immoderately than ever.

Lord Ardentower, with his hands in his pockets, having for a few moments turned from one to the other with looks of the most unequivocal contempt, now turned upon his heel, and deliberately walked away.

“And pray what is all this?” asked Lady Melmoth, mildly. “Are you laughing because Lord Borodale’s yacht lost?”

“O! he must have won, he was so far a-head,” exclaimed Trevelyan, “but, would you believe it, he turned back;” and they burst into another chorus of laughter.

“Turned back!” repeated Emily.

“Yes; turned back! ha! ha! ha! To be sure, it was the most absurd thing—the most ludicrous scene! O Miss De Cardonnell, what admirable sport you have lost! If you only could have seen the poor Count floundering about in the water!”

“Good God! Did he fall into the water?” exclaimed Emily.

“No, he—he *threw* himself in!” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, bursting into a fresh paroxysm of affected laughter. “There’s the absurdity! Ha! ha! ha!”

Emily clasped her hands in silent horror. From Colonel Ormond’s expression, she understood that

Count Waldemar had attempted suicide, and the blood curdled in her veins. But she possessed the most perfect self-command. She uttered no exclamation,—no word nor sound betrayed her anguish and horror ; but no marble was ever more pale, no statue more expressive of grief and despair, than her face. From the first her quick eye had observed that he was not upon the deck of Mr. Wentworth's yacht, in which she had seen him embark.

"Is he drowned?" she asked, in a low, calm voice.

"Faith, I believe not ! not quite. I believe they got him out alive ; hardly though," said Trevelyan. "But he looked so confoundedly ridiculous : exactly like a drowned rat, didn't he, Ormond ?"

"Egad he did ! He looked exactly like a drowned rat, when they picked him up all dripping, with the little fellow hanging to his coat tail."

"Who?" eagerly asked Emily.

"Why the little old fellow that he jumped in after."

"There he is !" exclaimed Emily, in a voice of such sudden joy that Colonel Ormond actually started and angrily fixed his eyes upon her now glowing face. She heeded him not—she saw him not. She saw only Count Waldemar, the supposed drowned man, walking vigorously up the bank, surrounded by the whole party, who were overwhelming

him with compliments and inquiries, from which he seemed most anxious to escape.

“How radiant with beauty and happiness Miss De Cardonnell looks !” said Lord Borodale to him as they advanced.

“Why Emily, how delighted you look !” said Percival Wentworth. “I hope it is at my unmerited victory.”

“No ; we were amusing Miss De Cardonnell with an account of Count Waldemar’s somerset in the water,” said Colonel Ormond, with a tone of pique. “And really, Count, you have no great cause to be flattered, for she only asked very coolly ‘Is he drowned ?’” And Colonel Ormond drawled out the words in a tone of such listless nonchalance, that although recognized as entirely his own, the whole party burst into one simultaneous chorus of laughter.

“Faith, she did !” exclaimed Trevelyan, bursting into one of his loud laughs. “It never struck me before, but ’pon my soul Miss De Cardonnell very coolly asked if he was drowned, just as I might ask the question about one of my puppies.”

One instantaneous reproachful glance Count Waldemar directed to Emily’s conscious face, and instantly averted his eyes ; but the pang,—the bitter pang, had struck to his inmost soul. She valued not his life. She for whom only he felt that life was valuable. He turned away,—dragged forwards by Lord Borodale

towards the house to get his dripping clothes changed, and he mechanically obeyed the impulse.

It appeared that an old man, in doing something at the stern of the Nautilus, (Mr. Wentworth's yacht,) which was second in the race, overbalanced himself, and fell overboard. In the confusion that ensued, every body calling out contradictory orders at once, and pulling the ropes in opposite directions, with unskilful hands and confused heads, the rigging became so entangled, that it was impossible to put the yacht about, to take up the poor man, who, left far behind, was now struggling fearfully in the waves. He could not see, much less reach, the ropes thrown out to him, and he was almost exhausted when Mr. Trevelyan's yacht, the last, came up. It might with very little delay have picked him up; but with inhumanity scarcely credible, Trevelyan steered past the poor drowning wretch, merely throwing out an useless oar, which fell far from him, and left him to his fate. A universal cry of indignation burst from the party on board of Mr. Wentworth's yacht, but at the same instant Count Waldemar, who was on board, threw himself into the water, swam to the spot, and caught him in the very act of sinking. Another moment, and he would have been too late. But, encumbered as he was with his clothes and boots, it was evident that the dead weight of the exhausted, helpless old man, who clung to him like lead, must inevitably soon drag him down to the bottom; and his danger became more imminent every moment. Still Mr. Trevelyan's yacht sailed on; while its

brutal master gaped over the stern with his worthy friend Colonel Ormond, who was coolly surveying, through an eye glass, Count Waldemar struggling in the waves with his helpless burden ; and they actually amused themselves with making bets whether he would sink or swim.

Still in Mr. Wentworth's yacht confusion inextricable reigned. The vessel itself was in danger from the state into which the rigging had been hauled by the rash and ill judged interference of the gentlemen, who, in endeavouring to rectify their first blunders, had done aggravated and serious mischief ; and to veer about at this moment was utterly impossible. Had not Lord Borodale, whose yacht was considerably a-head of them all, tacked and sailed back, the moment he saw that Mr. Trevelyan's yacht had sailed by, and that Mr. Wentworth's could not veer, Count Waldemar and his now insensible charge must have met a watery grave. But, crowding every sail, and gallantly repassing both the other yachts, Lord Borodale came to their rescue just in time to save them ; for the Count was almost exhausted, and it required all the skill of Dr. Doran, who was fortunately on board, to restore him and the poor old man whose life he had saved, to animation.

So much delay had been incurred by this retrograde movement, that Lord Borodale's yacht never recovered its lead. Mr. Trevelyan's for some time kept the start which it had gained by such odious means ; but Mr. Wentworth's yacht, which had righted just as

Count Waldemar and the old man had been saved by Lord Borodale's, and which had not, like his, again to tack, now pressed forward, and being a much better sailer than Trevelyan's, and much better navigated, in doubling the last promontory it gained such advantage, that passing it, almost at the last moment, it won the race,—and Trevelyan lost, to the joy of all beholders, who openly and unceremoniously expressed their exultation at his defeat. Indeed reproaches, and almost execrations, were thrown upon him on all sides, for his brutal selfishness and inhumanity. He stared and seemed amazed that people should think him such a fool as to stop and lose his chance of the race, in order to pick up “a fellow” with whom he had nothing to do. “Why, he belonged to the other yacht!” he exclaimed in astonishment. “It was no business of ours. It was cursedly lucky for us that they *had* to stop for him. We were like to make the most of it. No, by Jove, I'm not such a greenhorn as to lose the race and a hundred guineas to boot, for an old useless lubber like that. Why not let him take his chance?” He could never sufficiently wonder and admire at Lord Borodale's infatuation in coming back and losing the race, when he had it secure; and much did he marvel that Count Waldemar could be such a fool as to throw himself into the water, and get himself nearly drowned, in order to save an old man whose very name he did not know. “But as he *did* throw himself in,” he said, “it was his business

to get out again, not mine ;—besides, we had got past by the time he jumped in.”

“ Lord Borodale was much further in advance,” it was observed, “ yet he returned and saved their lives.”

“ Yes, and lost the match and a hundred guineas by it,” said Trevelyan, with a sneer.

“ I am glad of it,” said Lord Ardentower. “ I had rather that he had lost ten thousand matches and guineas than that he had not gone back. If he could have put winning a race in competition with the life even of the meanest of his fellow creatures, I should have been ashamed to own him as my son.”

“ It was so completely absurd of Count Waldemar to throw himself into the water, merely to save a common man like that,” said Colonel Ormond, affectedly.

“ A *common* man !” retorted Lord Ardentower. “ And if all *common* men were to be drowned, what would become of the uncommon ones, I wonder ;—you yourself among the number, Colonel Ormond ; for certainly you are a most uncommon man !”

The Colonel bowed profoundly to the unexpected compliment.

“ And not only uncommon, but unique,” continued Lord Ardentower.

The Colonel bowed still lower.

“ At least for the sake of society and human nature I would fain hope so,” concluded his Lordship.

Colonel Ormond looking very foolish and very angry, slunk away.

“ Lord Ardentower means for the sake of the female part of society,” said Percival Wentworth, “ for the sake of the ladies’ hearts, that he hopes and believes there is not such another man ;—does he not Emily ?”

“ O certainly !” said Emily, still laughing ; “ and it is quite impossible there can be such another.”

“ So then you think him quite incomparable ?” said Percival.

“ Quite !” said Emily, laughing.

“ And you agree with my father,” said Lord Borodale, smiling, “ that he stands unrivalled and alone—a perfect Phœnix among men ?”

“ That would be to think of him exactly as he thinks of himself,” said Emily ; “ but I believe and *hope* that he is matchless ; and that we ‘ shall never look upon his like again.’ ”

“ Admirable !” exclaimed Lord Borodale, laughing.

“ I will certainly tell him what you say, Emily,” said the mischievous Percival, “ and call Lord Borodale to witness it.”

She little supposed he would put his threat into execution ; but he actually and gravely did repeat that she had agreed in the opinion, that for the sake of the ladies—of whose hearts he was the irresistible enslaver—it might indeed be *hoped* there was not such another man ; and that she believed him to be “ incomparable,” “ unrivalled,” “ matchless,” “ a Phœnix

among men," and that "she should never look upon his like again." He maintained that these were her very words, and referred to Lord Borodale's testimony in proof of it, to the inordinate delight of the deluded Colonel, who was more than ever convinced that she must secretly be deeply in love with him, since even to others she expressed such high admiration for him.

Meantime the general conversation turned upon nothing but Count Waldemar's heroic exploit; and Colonel Ormond, annoyed at hearing on all sides the praises of the man he envied and hated, said, in a tone of pique, "Had it been to save any body's life of any consequence——"

"Your own, for instance?" interrupted Lord Ardentower. "Had it been to save your own precious life, Colonel Ormond, you would not have thought it by any means absurd in Count Waldemar to have thrown himself into the water?"

"No, certainly," began the Colonel——

"But in that case," again interrupted Lord Ardentower, "it would have been altogether unnecessary—for *puppies, when not very young*, are not easily drowned."

A roar of laughter burst from the young men, but especially from Mr. Trevelyan.

"As the Athenian said, when the mob applauded him," said Lord Ardentower apart to Emily, "'I must have said something very foolish, to have brought upon me *their* applause.'"

“ Indeed your Lordship said nothing foolish,” began Mr. Trevelyan, partly overhearing but not understanding him; “ it was confoundedly good—capital, faith !”

“ You are really too severe upon me now, Mr. Trevelyan,” said Lord Ardentower.

Emily laughed outright.

But Trevelyan, still in the dark, said, “ I didn ’t mean to be severe upon your Lordship, I am sure.—I was laughing to see Ormond look so foolish. Only look ! how foolish he looks !” And he laughed again, louder than before.

“ ‘ Thus one fool sees the folly of another,
And shakes his empty noddle at his brother,’ ”

said Lord Ardentower to Emily, as they walked on.

“ And why mayn ’t I laugh ?” asked Trevelyan.

“ Why indeed ? ” said Lord Ardentower.

‘ Laugh, fool, laugh ! laugh at thy brother ;
Why may n’t one fool laugh at another ? ’

Long and loud may he laugh,—since it is the only sign of rationality he was ever known to give ! ”

When Count Waldemar re-appeared, after changing his wet clothes, he was assailed by many of the party with high-flown compliments, exaggerated praises, and expressions of wonder and admiration at his achievement, which evidently annoyed him extremely, and drove him to the very extremity of his complaisance. Still, certain of the ladies, with singular want of tact, persisted in persecuting him, by

enlarging upon and extolling his exploit, until at last he was fain to fly from them, and to shelter himself in a corner of the room beside the only lady who had never spoken to him at all—namely, Emily De Cardonnell.

She now however immediately addressed him in a tone of voice and with a delicacy of expression which spoke to his heart. She knew it not; she meant it not. The words she uttered were few and insignificant in themselves, but there was a feeling in her accents, an expression in her eye, in which latent regret, pity, interest, and admiration were mingled, that spoke far more powerfully than words, her deep sense of his late noble conduct, and were peculiarly gratifying to his feelings.

Unable to resist the fascination, he lingered near her, but his tormentors still pursued him. The most persevering of these was Lady Harriet St. Leger, at all times his incurable admirer. Her Ladyship persisted in dwelling upon his heroic exertions and noble action of the morning, and maintained that few men in the world, except himself, would have done such a deed.

“Your Ladyship is severe upon human nature,” said Count Waldemar, with a faint smile, “and I am so much out of humour with it and with every thing at this moment, that I shall make but a feeble advocate for it. But I believe it is not quite so bad or so selfish as you represent it. Indeed, upon a principle

of pure selfishness, men should run some small risk for each other."

"Some risk, certainly:—but you threw yourself into the most imminent peril! You had very nearly sacrificed your own life."

"What if I had!" he said. "Life is not of much value. It is at best, short, (and perhaps that is the best of it,) and as it must so soon finish,

‘Qu’ importe, qu’ elle soit finie
Vers le soir, ou vers le matin?’”

"O, Count Waldemar, I cannot bear to hear you talk so!" exclaimed Lady Harriet.

"And I cannot bear to hear you talk so—absurdly, Harriet," said Lord Ardentower, who had just come up to them. "Why not let Count Waldemar hang or drown himself, as best suits his taste?"

A faint smile passed over Count Waldemar's countenance, as he replied, in answer to Lord Ardentower's observation, that having half tried upon himself the experiment of drowning, he should wait until the experiment of hanging was made upon him.

How little did Count Waldemar or any of his auditors then anticipate that he should ever live to be sentenced to such a doom!

Lord Ardentower now carried off his daughter to aid him in discovering, amidst the stray groups of the numerous company, the old titled dowager, whom it was his lot to lead off to the dining-room, as soon as the summons for adjourning there should be given.

Emily was touched by the deep melancholy painted upon Count Waldemar's countenance, and by his despairing words. "And do you really think so lightly of existence?" she said to him. "Do you, in the very morning of life, hold it so valueless?"

"But if that morning be obscured by clouds," he replied, with emotion, "if the sun of life be overcast, and the deep midnight of despair settles upon the soul; if all we loved—all we sought—all we pursued, vanish from our grasp, and if the long dreary vista of life present one cheerless, hopeless void; then, we may indeed bear the burden of existence, because it is the will of God,—we may even try to fulfil our allotted parts here in obedience to His command; but how, O how can life for itself be so dear to us, or its prolongation be so ardently desired?"

Emily was deeply affected. She saw before her a being possessed of the highest powers of mind, and unquestionably of some of the most generous virtues which can exalt our nature, with all the high hopes of youth, fortune, rank, and talents, a prey to incurable remorse and the victim of misery and despair;—and this by the commission of one single crime. The slave of passion, his whole life was embittered by

"One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
Its dark shade alike o'er his joys and his woes,
For which time nothing fairer or brighter can bring,
For which joy has no balm, and affliction no sting."

With equal delicacy and feeling she endeavoured to sooth his mind, by representing that virtue and happiness are always within our reach—that even when lost they may be regained, and that however miserable the present, the future might have happier days in store.

“Never for me!” said Count Waldemar. “My peace is destroyed—my hopes blighted—my prospects overclouded;—all that made life dear to me—the love, the esteem of my friends, lost to me for ever. What is there left to me to live for?” He paused a moment, then rapidly added, “The most dreadful malediction which the inveterate malice of man could find to denounce against his hated enemy was, ‘That he might outlive all his friends!’ But surely it is a far more bitter curse to survive their esteem—to have to mourn them in a living death—to know that they still live for others, though dead to us!”

Before Emily could trust herself to speak, Lord Ardentower as he passed, with the old Countess of Ambleside upon his arm, said, “Come, come! To dinner—breakfast I suppose we are to call it,—with what appetite you may.”

A general move was now made to the dining room, where an elegant cold collation was prepared. Colonel Ormond was on the watch as usual to seize his prey. Count Waldemar made no effort to rescue Emily, and most reluctantly she was compelled to take his arm and join the procession to the table.

A woman never is—never can be, sufficiently pitied for her hard fate in being doomed to accept the arm

of any disagreeable man who chooses to offer it, exactly as if he were her choice and her pride, while all the time he is probably the object of her aversion and contempt: neither the power of selection nor rejection is hers. This is undoubtedly amongst the greatest of the wrongs of woman!

When the important business of eating was concluded, the still more important avocation of dancing was commenced. There Emily escaped Colonel Ormond, for she had been engaged to Lord Borodale from the day of her dining at Beechwood.

Lord Borodale after dancing with Miss De Cardonnell, was sitting beside her, when Count Waldemar passed them. "What can have happened to Waldemar?" he said, "How wretchedly unhappy he looks! How altered he is from what I knew him in Paris: the life of society—the gayest of the gay—the admiration of the women and the envy of the men!"

"He certainly looks half dead to night," said Emily, "but then consider he was half drowned this morning." Emily could speak *of* Count Waldemar, though not *to* him, with levity.

"There is more in it, fair lady," said Lord Borodale, quaintly shaking his head as he fixed a scrutinizing glance full upon her face, "there is more in it than is noted in your philosophy: Count Waldemar looks either 'crazed with care,' or 'crossed in hopeless love;' which of the twain I would fain enquire of you,—being at once a woman and a witch."

"I deny the charge," said Emily, laughing.

“Deny being a witch, and a Lancashire witch to boot ! Then there is neither faith, truth, nor honesty in woman. But I can bring hundreds whom you have bewitched, to prove that you are bewitching, and consequently a witch. Go to—a witch you are proved to be ; and as Count Waldemar is, as I before said, indubitably bewitched, being either ‘crazed in care,’ or ‘crossed in hopeless love,’ I again ask you—which ?”

“Neither, I should say ; but if either, then both ; at least, if the last, the first. For if a man be ‘crossed in hopeless love,’ he must needs be ‘crazed with care.’”

“A witch, a witch !—a most right down, rightful, and arrant witch : I knew it ! Now assuming that he is crossed in love, which I gather from your mystic words, and still more mystic silence,—*why* crossed ? Tell me that ? Where Count Waldemar fails, who can hope to succeed ?”

Somewhat confused by the earnestness of his lordship’s look and manner, but far too well accomplished in the habits of society to betray it, Emily said, “But I doubt the fact : I do not believe it. Is there nothing but love that can alter an unlucky man’s looks and spirits ? Perhaps he is ill.”

“He cannot be very ill in health, otherwise he could not walk about, nor climb mountains, nor rush down precipices, nor throw men into lakes, nor jump into them himself, nor go through all the common and un-

common avocations of life as he does. And besides, mere bodily illness would never affect Waldemar's spirits as they are affected. It certainly must be love. What do you think, Miss De Cardonnell?"

"I think that if it really be love, and love only, he has the best possible chance of a speedy recovery."

"Unfeeling!" said Lord Borodale,

She ' jests at scars who never felt a wound.'

But have a care! Cupid is said to be a very revengeful little deity, and his arrow at last may pierce even your adamantine heart. Then will the ghosts and hosts of murdered lovers whom your cruelty has sent to roam upon the Stygian banks, rejoice."

Emily laughed, and said "If they be true lovers, surely they cannot rejoice in the sufferings of the person they loved?"

"O but they will! for by that time they must inevitably hate you; and you know,

'Earth has no wrath like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury like a *lover* scorn'd.'"

"But," said Emily, "surely these furious lovers will still retain some few sparks of their ancient flame, if it be true that

'Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.'"

"Barbarian! would you have the fires of love continue to consume them even after death, and when they had been already burnt to a cinder? But fair tyrants like you, are I see the most inhuman of tyrants; you

would carry your tyranny even beyond the grave. Even on earth you not only torture us unfortunate men without mercy, but laugh at the tortures you inflict. But consider, Miss De Cardonnell, as the poor frogs said to the boys in the fable, ‘ Though it is sport to you, it is death to us.’ ”

“ Yes ! the death of a tragedy hero, who dies to get up alive the next minute, ready to act his part, and die, *encore*. Lovers, like cowards, die many times before their death. No, no, my Lord ! ‘ men have died, and worms have eaten them, but not for love.’ ”

“ You are the most severe satirist of lovers and the most confirmed sceptic in love, I ever met with,” said Lord Borodale, laughing. “ But what do you say to the numerous true and tragical histories on record of faithful lovers who died for love ? ”

“ That they are very tragical, but not very true.”

“ Well ! say what you please, love is a very dreadful complaint—a disease of the heart, and often both incurable and fatal.”

“ A fatal disease is it ?—But what is it like ? Are people subject to frequent paroxysms of it like the gout ; or can they only have it once in their lives, like the small pox ? ”

“ Upon that knotty point,” said Lord Borodale with great gravity, “ doctors differ. Some maintain that the patient may have frequent returns of it ; but the more orthodox opinion I believe is, that the true, genuine complaint of love can only be taken once, as

you observe, like the small-pox ; and like that disease, it is said to be highly infectious."

"Then, if it resemble the small-pox, we may reasonably hope, judging from analogy, that in the present age of improvement and 'march of intellect,' some mode of inoculation for love as well as small-pox, may be discovered, so that it may be got over with perfect ease and safety."

"It is devoutly to be wished!" exclaimed Lord Borodale, laughing. "In the meantime I fancy we must submit to take it in the natural way, as I am afraid Count Waldemar has done."

After a pause, during which he was occupied in observing her countenance, Emily, who was led by a secret chain of thought from Count Waldemar's altered appearance to Pauline, inquired if the French women were very fascinating?

"Count Waldemar at least did not find them so," said Lord Borodale with a smile. "He was proof against their fascinations. *They* are guiltless of the mischief at least. If love it be, it is love for some *English*, not for any French lady, that consumes his peace."

Again his scrutinizing glance was fixed upon her, but in vain—she met his eyes with the most natural and unconscious look of inquiry and surprise. Conviction of his attachment to Pauline had prevented the idea from entering her imagination that he could be in love with herself.

“Are you thinking,” said Lord Borodale, after in vain examining her countenance,—“Are you thinking of the redoubtable adventure of a certain distinguished gentleman with the French lady, which made so much noise in Paris, and so many inuendos in London?—I assure you Count Waldemar was not the hero of that tale, whatever you may have heard.”

“What tale?—What is it?” said Emily, eagerly.

“Nay, if you have not heard of it already——”

“But pray—pray, tell it me!—I am dying of curiosity to hear it.”

“Dying of curiosity!—Now I am incredulous in my turn. To die of curiosity would be a more incredible death still than to die of love. Of curiosity I am sure you are incapable.”

“But indeed I am not; on the contrary I am full of curiosity to hear the story about this Frenchwoman,—that is, if it be no secret.”

“And would not *that* increase your curiosity to know it?” said Lord Borodale, archly.

“Perhaps it might,” said Emily, laughing. “But in that case I should not expect it to be gratified.”

“Well, it was a secret certainly; but like many others, one which every body knew, therefore I need not make any secret of it, especially as the lady is unknown here, and it reflects so much honour upon Count Waldemar.”

“Honour!” interrupted Emily, amazed.

“Yes, honour!—high honour!—I see you *have*

heard something of the affair—no doubt distorted and misrepresented by malice, as I know it has been. You shall have the truth from me. The lady in question was a *belle Parisienne*, at the head of the beau monde—young, witty, captivating, and a *franche coquette*. Her soirées were the most brilliant in Paris, crowded by all who could obtain the *entrée*. Even Napoleon himself honoured them with his presence: and Frenchmen and foreigners, the most distinguished by rank, fortune, and talent, did homage to her charms. This lady fell in love with Count Waldemar; but he did not return her passion. Her husband——”

“Her husband!” interrupted Emily, with unfeigned amazement.

“Yes, her husband!—O if she had not been married she could not possibly have fallen in love;—in France no unmarried woman ever dreams of such a thing. Her husband, a man of uncommon abilities, was Count Waldemar’s intimate friend. Probably *this* might be in part the cause of his insensibility; but so insensible did he shew himself, so blind to her advances, and so deaf to her insinuations, that at last she assailed him with *billets*, and poured upon him, through that channel, the whole powerful artillery of woman’s love. Waldemar answered her with reason. His letters (he wrote two) would have done credit to a sage, but they breathed the insensibility of a Stoic. Yet they were most adroitly seasoned with flattery; but it was of a kind calculated to awaken her pride,

and lead her back, if only from pure vanity, to the right path. Her rare talents, her many amiable qualities, her distinguished character, and the universal admiration it commanded,—her own fame and honour, nay his very friendship and respect for herself,—but, above all, his ties of intimacy with her husband, (who he knew tenderly loved her,) he pleaded, as the impenetrable shield that would for ever render him invulnerable to any feeling of love towards her. He still affected to consider her attachment as purely innocent, but the censorious world, he said, would think otherwise; and while he expressed his gratitude for her preference, he adroitly endeavoured to use it, so as to lead her to prize and requite her husband's attachment. In short, I can do no justice whatever to these admirable letters, which were written with such eloquence and delicacy and profound knowledge of the female heart, that they ought to have been engraven in letters of gold. But at the moment, they only added fuel to the flame of *la belle comtesse*. Piqued by his insensibility, and resolved to triumph over his heart, she continued to assail him with that touching 'eloquence du billet' of which she was so perfect a mistress. Waldemar returned no answer; and, mistrusting the fidelity of her messenger, she procured another; by whose mistake, unluckily, one of her letters was carried to an Englishman who lodged in the same hotel—an unprincipled libertine and a most consummate coxcomb, who had himself ineffectually laid

siege to the charming Countess. To guard against discovery, the letter was without either signature or direction; but the bearer was desired to enquire for the Count, and this respectable countryman of ours having artfully ascertained from whom it came, unhesitatingly declared himself to be the very man, and opened and answered the billet. Finding from its contents, that Waldemar had previously written to a very different effect, he pretended that he now wrote in a feigned hand to avoid detection—professed himself unable longer to resist her love—acknowledged the passion which devoured him—which honour only, he said, had hitherto compelled him to dissemble—and threw himself at her feet. He implored her to grant him a private meeting at the hotel late in the evening, to which she consented; but in spite of darkness and disguises, she instantly discovered the cheat and would have fled from the treacherous villain, unheeding his base threat of exposure,—but he had secured the door. She was at his mercy !——”

An exclamation of indignation and contempt here burst involuntarily from Emily's lips.

Lord Borodale hesitated a moment, as if doubtful of the propriety of relating more; but he felt it was more objectionable to stop short than to proceed; and that plain facts related with simplicity can seldom give offence to delicacy. He therefore went on.

“The lady did *not* behave like Lucretia of old.

She rightly preferred detection to dishonour. The wretch who had inveigled her into the snare, already triumphed in the *éclat* he anticipated, from her being discovered shut up with him in his apartments,—an event which, as he positively refused to liberate her except at the price of her dishonour, must inevitably have happened, but for Waldemar. The Count's apartments, however, happened to adjoin those of this Englishman, and on his return home at night, he heard the voice of the lady supplicating the wretch to release her. His attempts to obtain admittance were vain, and he therefore broke into the room by force, and having extorted from the villain a solemn promise of secrecy, he escorted the trembling lady home. Her absence had been so much prolonged, that it had excited alarm and suspicion ; but with the ready invention of a woman,—especially of a Frenchwoman,—she contrived plausibly to account for it, and her secret and her reputation might have been preserved had not the treacherous Englishman ‘ kept the word of promise to the ear, but broke it to the sense ’ ; for by hints, and boasts, and insinuations,—nay, even by exhibiting the lady's first letter, which by mistake had fallen into his hands, and her second, agreeing to the assignation at his hotel—he made his pretended good fortune public. Short however was his triumph. The lady, finding that the affair was universally whispered, and that this despicable Englishman was enjoying the reputation of a successful intrigue with her, revenged

herself upon him, by relating the truth. She exposed him in his true colours,—detailed the whole affair, and made him appear in the contemptible and ridiculous light he so justly deserved. With true French ingenuity, she contrived a scene in which he was covered with ridicule and humiliation before the whole world. His vanity, meanness, and perfidious baseness rendered him the scorn of society, so that he was glad to decamp in all haste from Paris.”

“And what became of the lady?” asked Emily.

“Why, there is great toleration abroad ‘pour les amours.’ The affair was represented in the most interesting light. Altogether it rather gained her fresh éclat;—certainly at least, her reputation, which in England would have been irretrievably ruined, in France was scarcely blemished. But it cured her of affairs of the heart for ever; and Waldemar had the supreme satisfaction of seeing his friend, her husband,—whose peace and honour he might have ruined,—happy in the fidelity and affection of his wife.”

Emily expressed her admiration of Count Waldemar’s conduct and her abhorrence of that of the despicable Englishman.

“‘Bad begins, but worse remains behind,’” said Lord Borodale. “This man had actually the unparalleled meanness and audacity, when rumours of the story reached England, to pretend that it was Count Waldemar, not himself, who had acted this villain’s part. And he took advantage of Waldemar’s

delicacy in committing the reputation of the lady to fix it upon him."

"What an atrocious villain!" said Emily. "Count Waldemar, however, might defy his malice, and say,

'Lie on! while my revenge shall be,
To tell the very truth of thee.'"

"That would be revenge indeed!" said Lord Borodale;—"for if the Count were to tell the truth of this man, he 'could a tale unfold' of still deeper dye, of the blackest perjury and the most perfidious treachery. But he is incapable of any, except a generous revenge."

Emily was silent, and Lord Borodale again adverted to the noble and honourable conduct of Count Waldemar under temptations so strong.

"He certainly acted nobly," said Emily. But she *thought* that perchance his insensibility to the charms of the French countess might be caused by his connexion with the French peasant;—a connexion formed by means the most treacherous and dishonourable: and this idea considerably diminished her admiration. She asked Lord Borodale many questions respecting his acquaintance with Count Waldemar in France, but obtained no information that could throw light upon his mysterious seduction of Pauline. It was evidently entirely unknown to his Lordship.

CHAPTER XIV.

MORNING CONVERSATIONS.

—“ There ’s no art
To find the mind’s construction in the face ;
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.”

SHAKSPEARE.

As the déjeuner at Beechwood, like most public breakfasts, did not terminate till long after midnight, when supper was served; the Wentworths, Miss De Cardonnell, and a few of the distant families, including Sir Reginald and Lady Rusland, and Mr. Trevelyan, staid the night. At breakfast, next morning, every one was unanimous in praise of the “ charming ball ” of the preceding evening.

“ Your Lordship must have thought it delightful ! ” said a young lady, a niece of Sir Reginald Rusland, to Lord Ardentower.

“ The days are long since past,” said his Lordship, with a smile, “ when I could think a ball ‘ charming ’ or ‘ delightful.’ It is an amusement where, as Ma-

dame De Stael once said of a grand fête, 'le corps fait plus de frais que l'esprit.' No, Harriet is the person for balls. She dates her existence by balls. 'I have lived so many balls,' she reckons; and thus she computes life."

Lady Harriet good humouredly joined in the general laugh, and observed,—“ In that case she must already be very old, for she should very soon have lived a century—of balls.”

The conversation next turned upon the looks, dress, manners, merits, and pretensions of all who had been present, and were now absent, which were canvassed (as usual after a ball) in a way which probably would have proved by no means satisfactory to the parties respectively concerned, if they could have overheard what was said of them. It has been observed, that we never speak *of* people as we speak *to* them; and that even the friends we value and esteem, would find something painful and grating to their feelings, both in the manner and matter of our conversation respecting them when absent, if they could overhear it. There is, perhaps, too much truth in this; and hence the saying, “that listeners never hear any good of themselves.”

Ladies have been accused of being ill-natured and censorious in their remarks upon each other, but the observations of men upon women are generally much more severe and unsparing. Of this, the conversation at breakfast this morning was an example; and we

may give one small specimen of it, merely to shew our fair readers how little they can ever gain by paying attentions to gentlemen.

“What a desperate hard set that Miss Good made at you, Wentworth, last night,” said Trevelyan.

“She was very assiduous,” he coolly replied.

“Poor Miss Good!” said Mrs. Wentworth. “What a pity that, like ‘the ci-devant jeune homme,’ she cannot forget that she *has* been young and handsome.”

“Nay, surely she is still handsome!” said Emily.

“But certainly *une peu passée*,” said Lady Harriet St. Leger.

“But she is still very lively and agreeable,” said Elizabeth.

“Lively and agreeable!” repeated Percival. “How can a *passing bell* be lively and agreeable?”

“O, Percival, you are really too bad!” exclaimed Elizabeth, laughing.

“As bad as you please, for then I shall always be far from ‘Good,’” continued the incorrigible punster.

“You are very far from good already, I am sure, Percival,” said Mr. Wentworth, looking up from his newspaper; “it seems a strange wish to be always far from good!”

“Only from Miss Good, sir.”

“And why from Miss Good?”

“ Only because she is much too good to me, and for me, and all mankind,” said Percival. “ Is it not strange that she should take so much pains to lose a ‘ Good ’ name?”

When the laugh had subsided, Mr. Wentworth began :—“ Really you are too severe upon poor Miss Good, Percival.”

“ Severe upon himself, rather,” said Mrs. Wentworth, “ for it is plain he will never follow after ‘ Good.’ ”

“ But how superlatively excellent I must be, then,” he exclaimed, “ when ‘ Good ’ follows after me wherever I go! ”

“ No such thing, Percival,” said Mr. Wentworth, “ you mistake Miss Good.”

“ I had rather mis-take, than take—Miss Good, sir,” interrupted Percival.

“ Banish him ! Banish him ! Turn him out ! He is one of the incurables ! ” was the universal cry, as the universal laugh prevailed.

“ Good ! We ’ll leave Miss Good now, for good,” said Percival, as the breakfast party dispersed.

“ Rochefoucault says truly,” observed Lord Boro-dale, as he rose, that ‘ *Le plus dangereux ridicule de vieilles personnes qui ont été aimables, c’est d’oublier qu’ elles ne sont plus.* ’ ”

When Emily, on her return home, related to her mother the adventures of the preceding day, she particularly dwelt, as may be imagined, upon Count Waldemar’s exploit of throwing himself into the lake

to rescue the drowning man ; and she spoke of his conduct in terms of praise which Mrs. De Cardonnell did not echo.

“ I cannot thoroughly sympathize in your enthusiastic admiration for this watery exploit of Count Waldemar’s, Emily,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ He is, it seems, a good swimmer and a brave man—which nobody ever doubted. The merit seems to be small, and the *éclat* of such an action was great, which would be of itself a sufficient inducement and reward.”

“ O, no indeed ! he was sincerely and unaffectedly annoyed by the *éclat* which followed it, and by the praises of his courage and magnanimity which burst from every mouth—my own excepted : of that I am quite sure. He seemed astonished that an action so simple and natural should be extolled as so extraordinary and praiseworthy.”

“ Well, granting the *éclat* was no inducement, he only followed the natural impulse of preservation in jumping after the man ; a sort of animal instinct—a water dog would have done the same.”

“ It is not every man that would have acted so like a dog, however, on such an occasion,” said Emily, laughing. “ No one else did so, and few would have perilled their own lives to save a poor wretch, humble and unknown. Still fewer would have afterwards thought so little of such a deed as he did.”

“ Or seemed to do,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, smiling.

“ O, no, my dear mamma ! as I told you before, I

am sure he really thought it only an act of common humanity, and took the utmost pains to shun the expressions of admiration which every body bestowed upon him."

"The very way to increase every body's admiration, as it has yours," said her mother, smiling.

"It certainly had that effect," said Emily, smiling, "though I am convinced he did it with no such view. But my admiration was faint and cold compared with that of others, especially of all the ladies."

"It is extraordinary," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "that there is no one quality which commands such general respect and admiration, especially from our sex, as personal courage, and none which deserves it so little. It is almost always a mere animal quality, dependent upon physical constitution; yet any striking instance of it, such as this for example, exalts a man to the skies, however worthless he may otherwise be. But remember, Emily, the most unprincipled men are often very courageous and careless of personal danger. We all know that a man may be very daring and very wicked."

"Count Waldemar *may* be the 'bold bad man' you describe, my dear mamma; but really it is quite impossible, in his presence, to retain that impression. Every word, look, and action, bespeak his moral superiority. I never met a man who seemed to entertain so high and true a sense of honour."

"Why, Emily, your admiration has indeed reached a climax!"

“ My admiration is quite involuntary,” said Emily. “ It is forced from me by every thing I see and hear of Count Waldemar, excepting that one detestable action, his treacherous seduction and base desertion of Pauline, which really is so completely at variance with the rest of his character—that——”

“ That you begin to doubt it ?” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ But remember he attempted no justification. How can we believe a man to be innocent when he admits his own guilt ?”

“ After all, I do not know what to think of him,” said Emily, as if thinking aloud : after musing a few minutes, “ Surely he cannot have been a deliberate villain : he cannot wilfully have deceived and betrayed that poor girl !”

“ Not *wilfully*, Emily,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, smiling. “ Do you think he did it accidentally ?”

“ No !” said Emily, awaking from her reverie and amused at the absurdity of her own speech ; “ but he is altogether very incomprehensible. His character seems to me a sort of moral paradox, uniting such incompatible virtues and vices,—such extremes of good and evil, that there is really nothing of human nature about him. I wish he was either not so bad, or not so good. If he were better, one might esteem him—if he were worse, one would detest him : but, as it is, he seems something between an angel and a demon—a sort of moral monster——”

“ And I hate all monsters,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ So do I, theoretically at least,” said Emily, laughing; “ and yet, practically I cannot bring myself to hate Count Waldemar.”

“ And yet one ought to hate him more for that very reason,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell. “ The great powers of mind, and the *natural* good qualities he possesses, render his moral delinquency and vices ten thousand times more unpardonable than they would be in a man less highly gifted with endowments of head and heart. When vice is united, as with him, to such imposing and splendid qualities, it becomes indeed, most dangerous.”

“ Splendid qualities, indeed !” said Emily. “ Generosity, magnanimity, courage, heroism, honourable ambition—that characteristic mark of a great mind,—genius, eloquence, and talent—all, all are his, and all blasted ‘ by one single crime,’ perhaps, too, a first and solitary crime.”

“ Ah, Emily, we know not that !—We know but of this one single crime ; but more may be concealed. But granting that this *may* have been his first lapse from virtue, who will say it will prove his last ? He has proved himself to be devoid of the only safeguard to virtue—principle. Alas ! there are too many who, like him, can

‘ See the right, and yet the wrong pursue ;’

who adore virtue, but practise vice, whose sentiments are good while their conduct is evil, and whose passions, in the hour of trial, break through all the barriers of principle.”

“He seems, indeed,” said Emily, “one of the many whose spontaneous feelings incline them to noble and generous actions, but whose passions, unrestrained, lead them wrong. But, mamma, is it not *possible*, that after all, he may be innocent of the seduction of Pauline—that she may have been seduced by some friend of his, and rather than betray his friend, he submits to the odium of his guilt?”

“My dear Emily, out of what nonsensical romance or lackadaisical novel can you have picked up such a preposterous idea? Granting that he was placed in this sentimental situation, in the name of common sense why could he not say so? Why not vindicate himself, without giving up the name of this very worthy friend of his? Besides, why should Pauline and her child follow him even to my brother’s house? Why should she continue under his protection? Why should he hire a house for her, and visit her in secret and alone? Why should she remain here at all? Why should she guilelessly let out that she had followed him here? Why should her child be called after him if she was his friend’s mistress and not his own? Why does he live in the wretched little inn at Coniston except to be near her? There are a thousand other proofs, if it were worth while to prove a fact so palpable and indisputable.”

“I am afraid you are right, mamma,” said Emily. “I own that it did once occur to me as just possible, that some intimate friend of the Count might have been the real seducer of Pauline: perhaps,” she

added with hesitation, "perhaps even Lord Borodale—"

"Really Lord Borodale is much obliged to you!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell. "But he is the most unlikely man in the world!"

"Except Count Waldemar," said Emily. "But although I am certain that the Count is too generous to betray his friend, and perhaps he could not clear himself without doing so; yet certainly in that case Pauline would have gone at first to Lord Borodale, not to Count Waldemar, and have continued under his protection, not under the Count's; and besides, Lord Borodale's christian name is not Henry, but 'Ferdinand.' And besides, mamma, I met Pauline by accident the other morning on my way to Nurse Martha's cottage, and I was determined to ascertain the matter: so I mentioned that Lord Borodale had been in France, and asked if she had ever happened to see him; but the tone and look with which she repeated, 'jamais!' was proof positive of her utter ignorance of him."

"And if by any chance she had happened even to have heard of Lord Borodale, which, as he was in France, was very probable, I suppose you would instantly have set him down as guilty?"

"O, no!" said Emily, laughing. "I should have read the truth in her speaking countenance; but it is quite clear that she knows him not. Then, mamma, I very ingeniously mentioned Count Wal-

demar's name, as if by chance, just to see how she would look."

"And how did she look?"

"Her eyes sparkled, and she exclaimed, 'Mon Dieu ! est-ce que vous le connoissez, Mademoiselle !' But I heard no more : for I saw some 'lakers' advancing towards us and talking loud ; and I am so great a coward now that I durst not encounter them, so I hastily bade her good morning."

"You heard enough, I think, Emily."

"Too much," said Emily, with a sigh.

CHAPTER XV.

A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

Til. But will you then refuse his offer ?

Gov. I must,—I will,—I can,—I ought,—I do.”

THE CRITIC.

THE day following this conversation, when Emily was alone, the servant opened the door and announced Colonel Ormond. In order to escape him, Emily instantly darted into the conservatory, which communicated with the drawing-room, and had just time to shelter herself behind a large camellia japonica before he entered the room.

Supposing himself alone, Colonel Ormond sauntered up to a large mirror, and after minutely surveying himself from head to foot with evident self-complacency, he at last exclaimed aloud,

“ ‘ Nature has indeed been kind ! ’ ”*

Emily, unable to maintain her gravity, now gave way to an uncontrollable fit of laughter, to the utter astonishment and discomfiture of Colonel Ormond,

* Fact.

who, hastily entering the conservatory, discovered her behind her verdant screen.

For perhaps almost the first time in his life, Colonel Ormond blushed, and he stammered out, "that he had not seen her."

"No, you were much better employed in seeing yourself, Colonel Ormond," said Emily, still laughing.

He protested "that in her presence he could see nothing but her beauteous self."

"Unless a looking-glass should be in the way and reflect your own unrivalled image, and tell you 'that nature has indeed been kind!'" she said, laughing.

"Poh! poh! mere badinage!" exclaimed the Colonel, somewhat disconcerted, "I assure you it was entirely with the view of being approved by your lovely eyes, that I looked at myself with the smallest interest in the mirror. 'Pon my honour it was!—If indeed," he added, in a tone of affected modesty, "if indeed I do possess any personal advantages,"—and he stole a glance of self-complacency down upon his fine person and finished tournure,—"they are valuable to me, only as they may serve to recommend me to you. Yes! it is you, lovely Miss De Cardonnell, whom I seek to please!—you, whom I came to-day purposely to see—"

"Are you sure?" interrupted Emily, archly. "Was it not to see yourself?"

"Cruel!" said the Colonel, looking disconcerted;

“you know your power, and love to exercise it. No! I came purposely to declare to you, what you must long have seen,—my love and admiration—”

“For yourself,” interrupted Emily. “I have indeed! I have long seen it; for it was too apparent to be mistaken: and it is a passion which has this great advantage,—that you never *will* have a rival.”

While uttering this sarcasm, she was hastily retreating to the opposite door of the conservatory.

“Nay, stay!” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, dissembling his anger, and trying to detain her. “Stay, I intreat! What! will you not even hear me, nor look at me?”

“Look at you!” interrupted Emily, “What! expose myself to such peril as to look at you! No, Colonel Ormond! Nature, in being kind to you, has been cruel to us! It must be dangerous to be near you,—fatal to look at you! Prudence commands me to avoid you. My only safety is in flight,”—and suiting the action to the word, she would have fled, but Colonel Ormond caught her flying scarf.

“Nay, hear me,” he began.

“Nay, hear *me*,” exclaimed Emily; and she archly sung

“‘The ruddy morn on tiptoe stands,
To see your matchless face;
Phœbus, by fleetest coursers drawn,
Sees nought so fair in all his race.’”

Now pray, Colonel Ormond, let Miss Aurora,

standing on tiptoe, and Mr. Phœbus in his phaëton, see your ‘matchless face’ as often as you please; but never, O never, for pity’s sake, let *me* see your face again!”

“Cruel Miss De Cardonnell!”

“Kind Nature!—what signifies who is cruel when ‘Nature has been so kind.’”

“Nay, Miss De Cardonnell,” said the Colonel, in a tone of ill-suppressed pique, “pray be serious!—You cannot but have seen my passion, but you know not its ardour. And unless you would condemn me to die of love,”—

“For yourself,” interrupted Emily, “like a second Narcissus! I do seriously think, Colonel Ormond, that you are in imminent danger of experiencing that tragical fate; and let me therefore warn you to shun the treacherous margin of brooks, lakes, and ponds,—but above all,” added she in a solemn tone, “beware of looking-glasses!” So saying, she suddenly darted away through the opposite door of the conservatory, leaving in the hand of her transfixed lover the scarf by which he had sought to detain her. She fled through the grounds till she found Elizabeth Wentworth, who was staying at Coniston Hall, reading in a sunny sheltered rustic seat, and to her inexpressible amusement, Emily repeated to her the scene which had just passed. When their mirth had subsided, Elizabeth said, “But why would you not let the luckless Colonel speak out? Why not let him unfold

his tale of love, and offer you his lily-white hand, of which he is so vain?"

"No, no! he did not mean to go so far as that either."

"But how do you know! You never will hear his sweet speeches to an end."

"But I hear the beginnings, which are far the sweetest, for he always begins with some high-flown compliment to me, but then he invariably ends with one to himself."

"But what greater compliment could he pay you than that of offering himself to you?"

"Offering himself!—O never!—Never would he dream of throwing away that precious person, of which he is so vain, upon any *one* woman, when he believes himself to be the admiration, contention, and envy, of the whole sex."

"Well, you will see."

"Impossible that he can have any serious thoughts of 'committing matrimony,' as he calls it! Why it would be ruin to his reputation, as leader of fashion—in coats and waistcoats. Vain would then be the glory of the Hessian whiskers, the Hussar boots, the Russian surtout, trimmed with frogs and fur,—the Paris tournure, the Adonis head,—and even the chapeau Napoleon itself."

"But then, if he were actually to offer to sacrifice to you so many glorious distinctions, Emily, how great ought to be your gratitude!"

“If he were to collect them all,—boots, whiskers, coat, hat, waistcoat, and toupée, and lay all these trophies of his triumphs in the lists of frippery at my feet,—as heroes of old used to lay the laurels they had won in fields of battle,—if he were”——

“Then, surely, you could not resist such an offering,” said Elizabeth, laughing.

“No, the whiskers would prove irresistible,” said Emily; “but these are not the times for sacrifices so heroic, nor is Colonel Ormond the hero to make them.” She went on talking in the same strain for a few minutes, while stooping to pull some flowers, but at last, receiving no answer, she turned round, and found herself alone. Elizabeth had disappeared.

She went on gathering her bouquet, expecting her every moment to return, but in a few minutes a voice at her ear softly said, “Will not Miss De Cardonnell condescend to cast one glance upon the most devoted of her slaves?”—and looking round, she beheld the languishing eyes and seductive smile of Colonel Ormond. Vainly did she now seek to escape.

“Most lovely, most charming of your sex!” he exclaimed, seizing her hand, “you would not surely fly from him who could for ever gaze upon you.”

“You are labouring under a strange delusion, Colonel Ormond!” interrupted she, “but I must undeceive you. Really I am not the looking-glass!”

Angry as he was, he now began seriously to protest that he came to throw himself, his hand and fortune,

at her feet. And thinking it incumbent upon him to suit the action to the word, he cautiously knelt down upon the sharp rustic pavement in front of the seat, continuing to pour forth a torrent of vows and protestations, regardless of Emily's efforts to interrupt and break from him.

"Why seek to fly only that you may be pursued, charming Miss De Cardonnell?" exclaimed the Colonel, with a confident smile. "Why feign this anger only to make me miserable? You cannot deceive me, you little dissembler, for I know this pretty disdain is affected. I know the secret of your heart—I know that you have long loved me."

Amazement chained Emily's tongue, as she gazed upon him, not quite certain whether he was in his right mind. He therefore went on uninterrupted.

"I know that your sweet excess of modesty alone has prevented you from believing the impression you have made upon my heart. I know you thought such a conquest hopeless, and that you despaired of having the offer of my hand;—but O!"—

An irresistible fit of laughter, which at this instant seized Emily,—whose quick perception of the ridiculous for the moment overcame her indignation,—here abruptly checked the Colonel's flow of eloquence at its very climax; but again it burst forth.

"I knew it was all feigned!" he exclaimed, triumphantly. "I knew how delighted you would be to

find that my hand and heart were yours. By heavens! you little coquette, you did it too well! You almost made me fancy that you were in earnest."

Emily's cheek now glowed with real indignation. She vainly tried to speak.

"I know well what you would say," he exclaimed, "but I will spare you the avowal,—I will spare your blushes,—your soft confusion. I know your heart has long secretly been mine,—that under the mask of disdain you have concealed your tender sentiments—your delicate preference for one not ungrateful, though undeserving. But you need not *now* blush to avow it. No, sweetest Miss De Cardonnell! behold me at your feet! I am all your own; and speedily shall the silken bands of Love and Hymen unite us."

"Never!" exclaimed Emily, "with a look and tone of haughty indignant contempt, which electrified the Colonel. "Never!" and recovering from the fit of risibility which this incredible display of egregious vanity and folly had irresistibly excited, she resumed her native character, and in a few decisive words of dignity and spirit, expressed her contempt for his presumption and her unqualified rejection of his proposals. And disengaging herself from him, she vanished from the hermitage, leaving the poor Colonel transfixed with astonishment and still upon his knees.

"Curse these confounded little sharp stones!" he

exclaimed, getting upon his legs with difficulty, and tenderly rubbing his knees, "I am bruised to a mummy. The devil take her pride! What can she mean by pretending to refuse *me*?—But she is angry I suppose because I let out that I knew she was in love with me, and felt sure that she would have me. Yes, she was angry at what she called my presumption.—Confound it, how haughty she looked! How proudly she measured me with her eye!" And muttering his rage and his vexation, and his determination to mollify her proud spirit by a little more humility and submission,—slowly and stiffly, and with sorely cramped knees, Colonel Ormond bent his way to the house, and mounting his horse, rode off,—amazed and disconcerted at his rebuff, but still nothing doubting of ultimate success.

No sooner was he fairly gone, than Elizabeth Wentworth came forth laughing from behind a large laurel, which had served her as a screen, and through which she had seen and heard all that had passed.

Emily bitterly reproached her for deserting her.

"O, but I sent you such a substitute!"

"*You* sent him!"

"Yes, while you were stooping and gathering those flowers, I saw him from afar, wandering hopelessly and helplessly along the walks, beating the bushes for you; so *I* took pity upon him, though *you* had none, and ran off to meet him, and told him where to find you."

“ You were really very obliging,” said Emily.

Elizabeth saw that Emily was really mortified and humiliated to find herself an object of serious pursuit to a man she disliked and despised, and still more by his presumption in supposing her in love with him ; she therefore avowed the whole truth of Colonel Ormond’s original mistake in fancying her an only child and consequently a great heiress ; of its confirmation by her mischievous cousin, Percival,—of the belief he had artfully impressed upon the credulous vanity of the Colonel, that Emily was secretly in love with him,—and of the conspiracy they had entered into, in which Elizabeth herself was an accomplice, to lead him on to make her an offer, in order to subject him to the mortification of a refusal. Finally, Elizabeth informed her, though scarcely able to articulate from laughter, that the preceding day Colonel Ormond, with the utmost gravity, had announced his determination to marry Miss De Cardonnell !

Percival Wentworth was one of the happy few whom he had favoured with this information. Trevelyan had also set the report a going, saying he had it from Ormond himself,—so that even before the offer was made, the marriage of Colonel Ormond to Miss De Cardonnell was talked of as a settled thing over half the country !

When Emily found that the grand object of his pursuit was her imaginary fortune, not her real self, her countenance brightened, and she began to enjoy

the idea of the vexation he would experience at discovering his mistake, and the mortification his vanity must have sustained from her rejection.

“Vanity like Colonel Ormond’s,” said Elizabeth, “may be wounded, but never can be destroyed. Like the fabled Hydra of yore, cut off one head, another will spring up in its stead.”

“Very probably,” said Emily, “he will straightway fancy some one else dying of love for him. But his vanity must be hurt by being rejected by me.”

“He will not believe in the possibility of it,” said Elizabeth: “you will see that he will return, expecting you to say ‘yes.’ Now Emily, if you would only *not* refuse,—smile, say nothing, and let him fancy you will have him,—and then, in the midst of his transports, let the tidings burst upon him, that you are not an heiress! O, it would be an incomparable scene!”

Emily laughed, but said it was impossible, after her positive and contemptuous rejection, that he should ever think of renewing the offer.

Meanwhile the discomfited lover, slowly wending his way homewards, encountered on the road that prince of mischief Percival Wentworth, who, judging from his crest-fallen countenance what had been his errand at Coniston Hall, easily drew from him the confession of his discouraging reception.

“Pooh! pooh! you know it is a matter of course to say ‘no’ at first,” said Percival. “It would be

contrary to all the established laws of female etiquette if any young lady were to accede to a proposal the first time of asking,—more especially such a young lady as my cousin, who knows how well she is worth the winning. And the more positive the ‘no’, and the more scornfully she uses you, the more certain is your prospect of success at last.”

Properly talked over in this strain, Colonel Ormond was confirmed in his resolution to prosecute his suit with unabated spirit, but more show of humility. “She’s confoundedly proud and high,” he muttered to himself, “but when she marries me it will be *my* turn!”—and thus indulging vindictive thoughts, the lover rode homewards, while Percival pursued his way to Coniston Hall, where he heard from Elizabeth, to his inexpressible amusement, the whole particulars of Colonel Ormond’s interview, first with the looking-glass and then with Emily. Percival now exerted his utmost eloquence to induce Emily to enter into his plan of mortifying and exposing Colonel Ormond; and even her mother, when she heard the whole history of the affair past and present, thought his mercenary views and his presumptuous confidence richly deserved the punishment designed for him. Emily therefore promised acquiescence upon the condition that she should never again be left in danger of a tête à tête with him.

The next day a party dined at Coniston Hall, consisting of the Wentworths, Lord Borodale and one of

his sisters, (Lord Ardentower, having a slight attack of gout, was prevented coming,) and Sir Reginald and Lady Rusland, with their hopeful kinsmen, Trevelyan and Colonel Ormond. The Colonel, with his most insinuating smile and speech, sought to ingratiate himself into the favour of Miss De Cardonnell, and was agreeably surprised by the gracious reception he met with, and by the smile, not to be repressed, which played upon her cheek whenever he addressed her in his usual strain of hyperbolical compliment. Notwithstanding the care with which she avoided being near him, and the promise Elizabeth had given her, never to desert her side for a moment, the Colonel contrived, as the Ruslands were paying their lengthy ceremonious parting compliments, to make the enquiry, whether, when next he had the presumption to bring forward the humble suit he had preferred the preceding day, he might not venture to hope for a more favourable reception? Emily turned away her head and hastily walked off, to hide her disposition to laugh, at the idea of the very unexpected reception it would meet with. She durst not trust herself to speak; but the smile, the archly beaming eye, the radiant countenance, were caught and interpreted by Colonel Ormond as he wished; and half whispering "silence gives the sweetest assent," as she hastily left him, he triumphantly looked around him, assured of success, and only wondering how he could ever have doubted of it. But not by himself only was Emily's

laughing cheek and eye of light misinterpreted. Lord Borodale had been unusually grave and silent all day. Colonel Ormond's late confident assertion that he was going to marry Miss De Cardonnell, which at the time he had heard with contempt and derision, startled him when he saw his persevering assiduities to her and her toleration of them ;—and he began to be reluctantly convinced either that she really did intend to accept him, or that even she was such a coquette as to encourage a man whom she despised, for the poor triumph of shewing her power and finally rejecting his offer. But when he witnessed her parting glance and Colonel Ormond's confident look and words, doubt was changed into conviction. He stood a few moments in moody meditation ;—then to every body's amazement he abruptly took his departure and set off on his return home, notwithstanding the intervening distance and the lake, which he must necessarily cross after midnight, on his way to Beechwood.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LOVER UNMASKED.

“ For fools are stubborn in their way,
As coins are harden'd by th' allay ;
And obstinacy 's ne'er so stiff
As when it 's in a wrong belief.”

BUTLER.

“ —Believe me, sir—
Nor your long travels, nor your little knowledge,
Can make me dote on you.”

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

“ Say and unsay ; fawn, flatter, and abjure.”

MILTON.

THE next morning Emily accompanied the Wentworths back to Esthwaite Castle to spend the day with them, expecting only to meet their own family party. Great was her surprise and still greater her dismay, on her entrance into the library before dinner, to behold the unwelcome apparition of Colonel Ormond, whom Percival Wentworth had invited, unknown to any one, and the very sight of whom was hateful to her. His conceited smile, his self-assured demean-

our, the confident air with which he addressed her, and the *empressement* he shewed to keep her entirely to himself and mark that he now considered her his peculiar property—were insupportable to her, though highly amusing to the rest of the party. By the malicious machinations of Percival, she was placed at dinner between Colonel Ormond and himself; and as he unremittingly devoted his conversation and attention to his lively little cousin Harriet Dormer, who was seated on the other side of him, poor Emily was utterly abandoned to the empty flattery and conceit of her languishing admirer. Emily found him so utterly intolerable, that her disgust and aversion were apparent to every eye except his own; and in spite of his inordinate self-sufficiency and of the belief infused into him by Percival Wentworth that her disdain was feigned, not sincere, his presumption received a severe check.

When the gentlemen entered the drawing room, Percival, seeing her entrenched upon a sofa between Elizabeth and Harriet Dormer, began to rally her upon her cruelty.

“Obdurate, hard-hearted Emily!” he exclaimed, “how can you witness the sufferings you have caused with such savage insensibility. Look, where your victim stands in an elegant attitude of despair! See how rueful are his looks and with what an air of sentimental melancholy he flourishes his pocket handkerchief!”

Emily playfully reproached him for his treachery, and insisted upon his ending the farce and the Colonel's suit by informing him that she had no fortune.

This Percival inexorably refused.

"Then I will tell him so myself," said Emily, resolutely.

But Percival was gone. He had crossed the room and was whispering into the credulous ear of the Colonel, that his cousin had been reproaching him for his treachery in divulging the secret of her concealed admiration and of her feigned coldness, which was intended only to try the strength of his attachment.

Encouraged by this false confidence, Colonel Ormond leaned over the back of the sofa and began afresh to whisper his softest speeches into her unregarding ear. "But why so cold? Why so distant? Why still keep up this exterior of assumed reserve?" expostulated the Colonel in his sweetest tone. "Surely *now*, at least, you need no longer seek to conceal the flattering partiality with which you have honoured me! Surely some small return is merited by the ardent and devoted passion which has so long filled my heart for you? Surely you cannot wrong me by doubting it?"

"On the contrary, Colonel Ormond," said Emily, coolly and deliberately going on with her netting, "I am credibly informed, that so far from feeling this desperate degree of passion of which you talk, you do not care a single straw for me."

“ Good Heavens !” exclaimed the Colonel, “ What concealed enemy can thus have poisoned your ear against me—envious of my good fortune !”

“ Fortune !—Yes, a good fortune !” interrupted Emily, emphatically—“ *that*, I am assured, is the grand object of your pursuit !”

Colonel Ormond, though with something of a conscience stricken look and a glance of suspicion towards Percival Wentworth, burst forth into the most vehement and extravagant professions of “ his perfect disinterestedness and his utter contempt for fortune ;”—as usual, like all persons acting a part, overshooting the mark, by affecting to think fortune utterly unworthy of consideration in matrimony.

Emily said she differed from him entirely, and thought fortune a very important consideration, and “ that she believed there was not one man in a thousand who would marry without money.”

“ Then I am that one !” exclaimed Colonel Ormond. “ I despise money. I could even wish that the fair object of my preference—” directing a distinguishing glance and bend of the head towards Emily—“ I could wish that *she* were pennyless, that I might shew before the world the disinterestedness of my attachment and my perfect freedom from mercenary considerations.—But why that incredulous smile, Miss De Cardonnell ? Do you doubt my honour ? Do you doubt my love ?”

“ Your love—of money ? No ! certainly not. I

was only thinking that when men talk of love, they should say *love of money*; for love of money is the reigning passion of lovers—

‘ Gold is the *lover’s* only theme,
Gold is the *lover’s* only dream.’ ”

“ Love of money !—How cruelly you wrong me ! I think not of money. Perish the sordid thought ! Who indeed would be base enough to marry for money ? ”

“ Why there are such men, I believe,” said Emily, drily.

“ Poor mean-spirited wretches ! ” exclaimed Colonel Ormond.

“ Despicable beings indeed !—Of all characters I think a fortune-hunter the most despicable,” said Emily.

“ The refuse of the earth !—Wretches beneath contempt or notice !—Miscreants who ought to be kicked out of the pale of society,” said Colonel Ormond, with a shrug of ineffable contempt.

“ And yet there *are* those, whom society, to its shame, admits within its pale—whose sole pursuit is an heiress,” said Elizabeth, significantly.

“ Incredible meanness,” said Colonel Ormond, rather embarrassed.

“ An heiress is a peculiarly unfortunate person, I think,” said Emily. “ In the first place, she must always suspect that every man who addresses her seeks her fortune, not herself; and even if she should con-

fide in the disinterestedness of her lover, yet there is something in the pride of man that revolts from owing obligations to a woman ; and though she may never consider it any obligation, he is always ready to fancy she does ; and the reflection that she has conferred upon him the fortune he enjoys, is galling to his proud, independent spirit. But a woman, on the contrary, loves to owe every thing to man. Every fresh obligation endears him the more to her heart. She looks up to him for protection and distinction ; and from him she is proud to derive honour, fortune, and happiness."

" Sweet creature ! she would love to owe all this to me !" whispered the Colonel to Percival Wentworth, who laughed aloud and then said,

" This may be all very true, Emily,—but for my own part, I have none of this extraordinary refinement. I think money a very good thing ; and if ever I do marry, I should like to marry a great heiress."

" For my part," said Mr. Dormer, who had been excessively hurt by the marked preference Louisa Wentworth had shewn to Lord Borodale, both during the Carlisle races and on the preceding day ; and whose passion was extremely cooled by her caprices and flirtations—" for my part, I think he is wisest who does not marry at all—

' I would advise a man to pause,
Before he take a wife ;
Indeed, I own, I see no cause
He should not pause for life.' "

“ But if he does swallow the pill of matrimony,” said Percival, laughing, “ at least let him take care that it be well gilded.”

“ O fie, Percival !” said Harriet Dormer. “ You should think fortune beneath your notice, like Colonel Ormond. You see he despises it. *He* would not marry an heiress !”

“ Not because she was an heiress,” said Colonel Ormond. “ It is for herself alone I love her,—for herself I would marry her,”—directing the most significant glances to Miss De Cardonnell.

“ And you would marry this angelic creature of your choice then,” said Elizabeth, “ even if she had no fortune whatever ?”

“ She herself is all the fortune I seek !” said the Colonel. “ I would choose her from the world as freely with no dowry but her native charms, as if she were possessed of millions.”

“ I declare Ormond, you are most unusually eloquent to-night. You are quite inspired,” said Percival Wentworth.

“ There is the fair source of my inspiration,” said the Colonel, bending his head to Miss De Cardonnell.

A faded rose, which Emily wore in her sash, at this moment fell upon the carpet. Colonel Ormond flew to pick it up, and pressed it devotedly to his lips.

Emily laughed. “ Don’t keep that old rose, Colonel Ormond ! Pray put it into the fire !”

“ I will—into that fire which burns in my breast for her who wore it”—and he placed it in his bosom.

“ O Emily ! will you let him keep it,” whispered Harriet Dormer, wondering at Emily’s philosophy in patiently sitting and looking at the Colonel appropriating the rose; and thus missing so capital an opportunity of flirtation.

“ He is most welcome to it,” said Emily, “ for it is worth nothing.”

“ O Emily ! how *can* you let him keep it ?” expostulated Harriet.

“ Keep it !” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, overhearing her words, “ I will keep it while ‘ memory holds her seat.’”

‘ I will wear it in my heart—aye, in my heart of hearts.’ ”

“ It is of no use”—Emily coolly began—

“ The wealth of worlds would not tempt me to forego the fair hand that plucked it !” interrupted the Colonel, in a half whisper.

“ O Emily, you have lost your beautiful bracelet,” abruptly exclaimed Harriet, suddenly looking at her arm. “ It must have dropped off when you were playing upon the harp.”

“ I will fly to find it,” said Colonel Ormond, with wonderful alacrity.

“ Pray don’t take the trouble,” said Emily, quietly.

“ Trouble !—I would fly to the end of the world—”

“ It is only in the next room,” interrupted Harriet.

“ Don’t go so far, pray, Colonel Ormond. It is only labour lost, for I assure you that I am not an heiress, and that I have no fortune.”

“ No fortune !—Not an heiress !” exclaimed the thunderstruck Colonel, arrested in his flight, and standing still, the picture of consternation. “ Not the heiress of Coniston estates ?”

“ No—nor the heiress of a single acre of land, nor of a single sixpence of money, Colonel Ormond ; so pray give yourself no further trouble about me,” said Emily, as she quietly walked off into the inner drawing-room to look for her bracelet, followed only by Mr. Dormer.

“ Good Heavens !” exclaimed the petrified Colonel, “ how I have been deceived !” Then perceiving the universal laugh upon the faces around him, the bright idea struck him, that this pretence of poverty was only made by Miss De Cardonnell to try the disinterestedness of his attachment. “ Ah, I see how it is !” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, turning to Percival Wentworth. “ This is only a stratagem of Miss De Cardonnell to try me. But I shall come out like gold seven times tried in the fire. It will serve to prove my perfect disinterestedness. My hand and heart should equally be hers if she were indeed penniless ;—” and he would have followed Emily, but Mr. Wentworth stopped him and coolly said,

“ Then, Colonel Ormond, I have the happiness to

assure you that your 'disinterested attachment' may shine forth in its full glory: for to tell you the truth, she is pretty nearly so."

"Impossible! you jest," said Colonel Ormond, with a long and most serious face of alarm.

"It is sober truth."

"And who then is General De Cardonnell's heir?"

"His only son, Charles, now at Eton, upon whom all his landed property is entailed."

Colonel Ormond's rage and indignation knew no bounds, and he bitterly accused Percival Wentworth of deceiving him.

"I never deceived you," said he. "When you enquired whether, failing male issue, General De Cardonnell's estates would go to his daughter, I assured you with perfect truth, that they would. The trifling circumstance of her having a brother, I never thought it worth while to mention, since you never even enquired about it, and I knew that it must be perfectly immaterial to you, because you always assured me your attachment was 'perfectly disinterested.'"

Colonel Ormond groaned. "And the independent fortune which she inherited from her grandmother?" he asked.

"Her grandmother left her £5000, which she will have when she marries or comes of age," said Mr. Wentworth.

Colonel Ormond groaned afresh deeper than before,

and muttering execrations against his own folly and Percival Wentworth's duplicity, he strode up and down the room, biting his lips with rage and vexation, with his hands stuck in his pockets, utterly forgetful of his elegance and nonchalance.

"But what a fine opportunity has this happy mistake given you of proving your 'perfect disinterestedness and your utter contempt for fortune,'" said Percival Wentworth, imitating his tone so exactly, that universal laughter resounded in the ears of the enraged Colonel Ormond.

"How fortunate that 'for herself alone you love her—for herself alone you would marry her,'" said Elizabeth.

"'That she herself is all the fortune you seek! That you would choose her from the world as freely with no dowry but her native charms, as if she were possessed of millions,'" again mimicked Percival.

"Confusion!" exclaimed the Colonel, striding up and down the room with redoubled velocity.

"Happy man! Even your very wish is accomplished," continued the unsparing Percival, still imitating him to the very life. "You would wish that 'the fair object of your choice were indeed penniless, that you might, before the whole world, show the disinterestedness of your attachment and perfect freedom from all mercenary considerations.' Now is the time to show it!—Now throw yourself at her feet!—Now seek 'that fair hand which the wealth of worlds would not tempt you to resign.'"

“D——n!” burst from the lips of the exasperated Colonel. At this moment the faded rose fell from his breast, and he kicked it impatiently from him.

“O, Colonel Ormond!” exclaimed Harriet, “the rose! the precious rose! the rose that you said you would wear next your heart for ever: you are crushing under your feet.”

“Confound it!” said the Colonel, again spurning it from him, amidst a chorus of laughter.

“Well, Colonel Ormond,” said Mr. Wentworth, “you surely cannot be that poor, mean spirited wretch whom you so justly despised: that ‘refuse of creation,’ that ‘despicable creature that ought to be kicked out of the pale of society,’—a fortune hunter.”

Colonel Ormond hung his head. It was even affirmed, that for the first time in his life, he was seen to blush.

“He cannot speak! He cannot find words to express the sentiments of his soul!” said Mrs. Wentworth, ironically.

“Think, Colonel Ormond, then of the sympathy which must exist between my cousin and yourself,” said Elizabeth, “for if you cannot find words to express your sentiments for her, she said she could find no words adequate to express her opinion of your extraordinary——I forget what it was—something very extraordinary——”

“I remember:—it was extraordinary impudence,” said Mr. Wentworth.

“What sir?” said the Colonel, angrily turning round upon him, doubly incensed at the universal laugh.

“Nay,” said Emily, who had now re-entered the room, “your anger must be directed against me: it was I that said so.”

“But,” pursued Percival, “Emily cannot deny that she told Lord Borodale that she believed the whole world did not contain such another man, and that ‘she should never look upon his like again.’”

“You forget that I added—‘I hoped not,’” said Emily.

“But you know you said he would be an unrivalled man—”

“An unrivalled man-milliner, I once said,” interrupted Emily.

Colonel Ormond stamped upon the floor with vexation, while the laughter of the whole party fortunately drowned his half smothered oath.

“Nay, deny not your praises of him, Emily,” said Percival. “Colonel Ormond knows not how, in high poetic strain, you once likened him to a popinjay.”

“A popinjay!” repeated Colonel Ormond, almost frantic with rage.

“Yes, a popinjay, which means a parrot: and a parrot being a very beautiful bird, she must of course have thought you very beautiful; she also declared” continued Percival, preventing him from

speaking, "that your talk was like 'a waiting gentlewoman's,' which description of females being (so far as my acquaintance with them goes) blessed with a remarkable flow of eloquence, she must of course have thought you very eloquent."

"Mortal patience cannot stand this any longer!" exclaimed the enraged Colonel, making towards the door through which Emily had the preceding moment effected her retreat.

"Stop, sir," said Mr. Wentworth, "one word at parting:—this young lady is my niece, and in the absence of her father I must consider myself as standing in his place. You have, I find, made her a formal offer of marriage, believing her to be a rich heiress and possessed of an ample independence, which after finding her destitute of fortune, you wish to retract. Is it not so?—Speak!"

"I—that is—really," stammered out the Colonel, "I admired Miss De Cardonnell, certainly."

"While you thought her rich," said Mr. Wentworth; "we know that."

"But you wish to *be off* now," said Percival.

"I—really—I own that without fortune I could not possibly marry."

"But she has a moderate fortune—she has £5000 as I told you, and possibly may have something more."

The Colonel heaved a deeper sigh than love had ever drawn from his breast, and said, "How much?"

“ Altogether she may probably have ten thousand ” (the Colonel groaned,) “ at her father’s death. Now, sir, I must observe, that you have come under a regular legal unconditional ‘ promise of marriage ’ to my niece ;—that in a court of justice you would have to pay heavy damages for ‘ *breach of promise of marriage* ! I leave you yourself to estimate *how* heavy ! What a heart-breaking disappointment—what an irreparable loss must your alliance be !—What indemnity would be sufficiently great ? ”

“ What, indeed ! ” groaned the Colonel.

“ Half your fortune would scarcely be sufficient. ”—

“ What, then, *must* I marry her ? ” dolefully ejaculated the Colonel.

“ But so generous is my niece—so compassionate and merciful, that she will voluntarily resign all these high advantages of your alliance, and exonerate *you* from all the pains and penalties attendant alike upon the fulfilment, or the breach of your promise of marriage,—upon two conditions. ”

“ What are they ? ” exclaimed the Colonel, eagerly.

“ The first is, that you acknowledge before these present witnesses, that your object in offering her your hand was her supposed great fortune ; or in other words, that you are a fortune hunter ? Do you acknowledge this ? ”

After much shuffling, and quibbling and evasion, the Colonel, alarmed at the dread alternative, was

compelled to acknowledge the truth of the charge, and stand confessed a fortune hunter.

“That is the first condition,” said Mr. Wentworth.

“The second is, that she never sees your face again.”

“Curse me if she ever shall if I can help it!” exclaimed the Colonel, giving an instantaneous practical assent to this last condition by rushing out of the room, followed by a chorus of laughter from all the spectators.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MYSTERY REVEALED.

“ Rien ne pèse tant qu'un secret,
Le porter loin est difficile aux dames ;
Et je sais même sur ce fait
Bon nombre d'hommes qui sont femmes.”

LA FONTAINE.

AFTER the Wentworths and Emily had left Coniston Hall on the morning of the day on which the scene which we have related in the preceding chapter took place, Mrs. De Cardonnell, who was sitting alone, received a visit from Lord Ardentower, who entered the room with a most serious countenance, and told her that in spite of his gouty symptoms he had come so far purposely to make a communication which materially concerned her daughter. Mrs. De Cardonnell looked up in amazement and perturbation. But without pausing, he proceeded to say that however officious and unwarrantable his interference might appear, he could not, as a friend, see the happiness of her daughter irretrievably sacrificed without making her acquainted with some circumstances which, he trusted, would yet induce her to break off the match.

“ The match !” interrupted Mrs. De Cardonnell, with surprise. “ What match ?”

“ Why, don't *you* know of it?—Is that possible? Don't you know that your daughter is going to be married to Colonel Ormond?—Nay, it is no laughing matter,” he gravely continued, not at all sympathising in her mirth, “ it is but too true.”

“ Who could have told your lordship such a preposterous tale?” asked Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ Who! why the animal himself. Some days ago, it seems, he had the assurance to tell Borodale, in his conceited style, that he was going to marry, and that Miss De Cardonnell was the object of his choice. But Borodale, concluding that he would not be hers, only laughed at his vanity and presumption. But last night, when it seems they met at dinner here, he again triumphantly informed Ferdinand, at parting, that he had obtained the fullest assurance of the lady's preference and that his success was certain; and Ferdinand had observed yesterday, that Miss De Cardonnell did not behave to him as she would have done to a discarded lover;—besides, he had accidentally overheard something which convinced him that Miss De Cardonnell actually admitted of his addresses. Nay, Colonel Ormond boasted that he was invited to dine yesterday *en famille* at Mr. Wentworth's, purposely to meet ‘ his fair intended,’ as he called her.”

Mrs. De Cardonnell's laughter at first defeated her attempts at explanation.

“ She may not yet have informed you of it,” he

continued. "Perhaps she leaves it to him to break it to you in form; but depend upon it the affair is settled between themselves."

"How is it possible your Lordship could for a moment believe that Emily could think of such a man?"

"I never did think it possible; but I am assured it is true. And though a consummate coxcomb, he is handsome and fashionable, and assiduous and flattering—and in short, it appears, by his own declaration and her admission, that he has won her consent. But I have that to tell of Colonel Ormond that if she were at the very altar would make her instantly reject him with scorn and indignation."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell with surprise, "I should like to hear it. But first let me clear up this foolish business." And she briefly explained to Lord Ardentower Colonel Ormond's pursuit of Emily under the mistaken belief of her being an heiress, and the plot of Percival Wentworth, aided by his sister, to lead him on to declare himself, that he might be rejected and ridiculous.

"If you are sure of this—quite sure that he has no possible chance of success," said Lord Ardentower, "then I need say no more; but if it be within the limits of possibility, 'I could a tale unfold.'"

"Then pray unfold it; I like a tale of all things."

"It is a tale which I was desired to keep secret—but I don't see why I am to keep Colonel Ormond's secrets."

"If it be a secret, I am of course more than ever

desirous to hear it," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, laughing.

"Then you shall hear it," said Lord Ardentower—

"Perhaps," said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "I ought first to observe, that if it be the tale of the French Countess at Paris which Lord Borodale related to Emily the other night, she at once divined that the Englishman who acted so despicable and villainous a part towards the lady and Count Waldemar, could be no other than Colonel Ormond, although she refrained from mentioning her conviction, perceiving that Lord Borodale did not wish to name him."

"She did divine it!" exclaimed Lord Ardentower. "I admire her penetration. She was perfectly right. But it is not that anecdote, it is another, of a character still more atrocious and base, as you shall hear." And he began to relate it; but to avoid the interruptions and digressions of dialogue, we shall briefly give the substance of his narrative as follows:—

When Colonel Ormond was residing at Verdûn with the rest of the détenûs, he was attracted by the beauty and modesty of a girl whom he accidentally saw, in one of his rides, at the door of a cottage in the vicinity of the town. He immediately endeavoured to get acquainted with her, by pretending ignorance of the road to some place in the neighbourhood and asking for directions; but a talkative old woman came forth, attracted by the sound of his foreign accent, and sending her daughter into the house, loquaciously answered all his inquiries. In vain he prolonged the

interview ; no further glimpse could he obtain of her pretty and piquante daughter. He learnt from the old woman that her husband was a small farmer, or rather a *petit propriétaire*, who lived upon and cultivated his little piece of land ;—for the produce of which, consisting chiefly of fruit, vegetables, milk, butter, eggs, and poultry, he found a ready market at Verdûn, where the increased demand and high prices caused by the residence of so many English détenûs, had of late produced great profits. “ He had been,” she said, “ previously sorely impoverished by the taxes ; and worse than all, their two sons had been taken by the Conscription, and had both perished in battle ; and this daughter was their only surviving child, the hope and comfort of their age.” And “ still harping upon her daughter,” much did the good woman extol her manifold virtues, her innocence, docility, and industry ; and enlarged upon her rustic expectations ;—told how she was engaged to a young farmer of the neighbourhood,—and how they hoped that the next year they would be able to give her a handsome *trousseau* and see her happily married.

The licentious character of the young Englishmen was so well known and dreaded, that Colonel Ormond at first found some difficulty in cultivating the intimacy of the pretty paysanne ; but at last he succeeded, by inciting a party of his riotous inebriated companions to surround and insult her, as she was returning home one evening from selling her laitâges at Verdûn, and

then rescuing her from their rude violence, which he easily effected, by claiming a prior right to her;—a claim which, with loud shouts of laughter, they unanimously allowed—for he had previously boasted of his success in that quarter; and as Pauline understood not one word of English, she only knew that he was her rescuer and protector. The blessings which the good old people showered down upon Colonel Ormond as the deliverer of their child—their warm overflowing gratitude, and the innocent smile and rosy blush with which the pretty paysanne herself looked her thanks—might have touched any heart less hardened than that of a confirmed sensualist. But, like *Milton's hero*, this man of pleasure saw happiness and innocence only with the fiend-like wish to destroy. Unrelentingly he pursued his infamous schemes, and took advantage of the gratitude and confidence of these kind open-hearted people to make daily visits to the house. Flattered by his condescension and wholly unsuspecting of his design, he received a constant welcome: but the old woman was continually in his way. Out of a pure wish to make him happy, she tormented him to death with her officious hospitality, her incessant loquacity—and, above all, with her eternal presence. It was not however surprising that the gay, the insinuating, the elegant Colonel Ormond, with his pretended devotion and whispered love, should succeed in supplanting the young rustic for whom the pretty paysanne was destined, and who

indeed was rather chosen for her by her parents, as an eligible match, (according to French custom in all ranks,) than the object of her own preference or affection. But Colonel Ormond's artful attempts against her virtue were effectually baffled by her modesty, pride, and prudence. Her virtue and resistance served to inflame the evil passions of her lover, and he determined that his she should be at whatever price. Stratagem had proved unavailing; force the law would severely have punished: there was no resource left but the most villainous deceit. He determined to accomplish his ends by a fictitious marriage. The consent of her parents to his pretended honourable proposals, it may easily be supposed, was readily and joyfully given. Nor from her did he find it difficult to obtain pardon and acceptance. Her heart pleaded powerfully in his favour; and his prayers, his artful blandishments, his affected penitence, in one short interview, obtained her agitated but rapturous consent to an immediate marriage. Could she deny it to him who swore he could not live without it?—Could she refuse to become his wife, who vowed, by all that is most sacred, never to deceive and never to desert her? He found it easy to persuade these honest, unsuspecting people of the necessity of the marriage being private. He was, he said, dependent upon an uncle, who would never pardon a *mésalliance* if it reached his ears. But when he returned to England and presented his wife to him, her beauty, her excellence, her

native graces, would instantly win his heart, and avert every evil consequence of the marriage. “His uncle, indeed,” he said, “was old and rapidly declining, so that probably his life would be very short. Present secrecy, therefore, was of the last importance.” The parents consented. A man, the infamous pander to his vices, in the disguise of a priest went through the mummery of a mock marriage. No suspicion of its validity ever occurred to the innocent girl; nor, if it had, could she have believed it possible that the world contained a villain base enough even to take advantage of a mere informality, much less to have deliberately contrived it. How little then could she have imagined that such a villain was her husband! She thought no human law could break the solemn ties voluntarily formed, which bound them to each other, and no earthly power dissolve vows contracted in the name and in the face of Heaven.

“What was her name?” eagerly interrupted Mrs. De Cardonnell, at this crisis of the story.

Lord Ardentower, looking surprised, said, “he really did not know.”

“Did she come to England—to this neighbourhood?”

“No, never,” said his Lordship, and continued,—
“During the whole of Colonel Ormond’s residence at Verdûn, she lived with him, and had borne him one child, when he obtained leave to go to Paris, where, he assured her, he expected to negotiate his final libe-

ration, and he would then carry her to England and acknowledge her as his wife. Months passed away in the dissipation of that gay capital. At length negotiations for peace were opened, and all the *détenûs* of fortune or consequence obtained, by bribery or interest, permission to depart. Colonel Ormond set off to England, writing a cold and cruel farewell to the unfortunate victim of his treachery, informing her that she had no legal claim to the title of his wife; that it was out of his power to acknowledge her as such, and holding out vague and delusive promises of his return. He enclosed her a sum of money for her immediate maintenance, and promised to remit her more; a promise he never fulfilled: but he made no mention of settling any permanent provision upon her. Thrown into an agony of grief and despair by this shock, she instantly set off to Paris, in the hope of reaching it before his departure; but he was gone. She was there seized with premature labour, and delivered of a still-born child, and her own life was for some time despaired of; but at length she slowly recovered, and returned to her now melancholy home at Verdûn. The poor old mother, however, was broken-hearted; her spirits fled, her strength declined, and after lingering for a few months, she sank into the grave."

The inhuman sort of joy which Mrs. De Cardonnell here expressed at the mention of the old woman's death, (for she remembered that Pauline had related

that her mother had died in the same manner, and she was now convinced that they were one and the same,) together with the various unintelligible exclamations which she had uttered during the progress of the narrative, almost led Lord Ardentower to suspect that she was not quite in her right mind.

“ Why, what possible pleasure can the poor old woman’s death give you ? ” he asked in amazement.

“ The greatest ; I have wronged Count Waldemar and most unjustly calumniated him ! ” she exclaimed with a look and tone of delight.

“ How having wronged and traduced Count Waldemar can give you any pleasure, or what it has to do with the old Frenchwoman’s death, I am utterly at a loss to conceive.”

“ Because I have accused him falsely of being the seducer of that innocent French girl, whom it seems Colonel Ormond betrayed and deserted, and who is here ! ”

“ Here !—No such thing ! Impossible ! ”

“ She is—she must ! ”

“ Well—if she must ! ” said Lord Ardentower with an expressive shrug of resignation.

“ It must be so ! It is impossible there can be two such villains—or two such victims.” And she related to the astonished Lord Ardentower their accidental meeting with Pauline, and the suspicions, or rather conviction they had been led to form that Count Wal-

demar was her seducer—"though why he should quietly submit to such an imputation," she continued, "is more than I can imagine."

"Possibly Ferdinand may be able to explain the mystery. I made him promise to meet me, and he will be here in a few minutes," said Lord Ardentower, deliberately pulling out his watch. "It was from him I heard the story on his first return from France; but when that villain Colonel Ormond came down here, Ferdinand begged me to keep it secret, saying he had promised to do so, for which I told him he was a great fool. However I should not have mentioned it but for the man's audacious presumption in aspiring to the hand of Miss De Cardonnell—nay, asserting that he was actually going to be married to her!"

Lord Borodale, on his entrance, was assailed by questions from Mrs. De Cardonnell respecting Pauline. He looked astonished that she should know even of the existence of such a person; and at first was much concerned to find that she had derived any part of her information from Lord Ardentower. But the moment he learnt that she had long known Pauline and her history, and erroneously believed Count Waldemar to be her betrayer, and that she was now aware that Colonel Ormond was the guilty person, Lord Borodale felt there was no longer any secret for him to keep, and he warmly and eagerly vindicated his friend. He explained that when Pauline followed Colonel Ormond

to Paris, she of course went immediately to the hotel where he had lodged ; and on hearing of his departure, she fell into a state of insensibility, which alarmed the people of the house for her life ; while her poor old father, almost frantic with grief and despair, loudly lamented over his injured, his innocent, his murdered child. Count Waldemar, who lodged in the same hotel, hearing these sounds of distress, came out of his apartments and was a spectator of this affecting scene. Deeply interested by the tale the poor old man communicated to him, and by the appearance and situation of the unfortunate Pauline, he exerted himself warmly in her behalf ; and having procured the present accommodation, attendance, and comforts, which her immediate confinement and dangerous illness rendered necessary, he made himself master of every particular and fact of the case, wrote to Colonel Ormond on the subject, and by the threat of public exposure from Pauline's father in a court of justice, and a prosecution for seduction of his daughter, and another from herself for breach of promise of marriage ; he at length extorted from him an agreement to settle upon her an annuity of £100 per annum, and actually compelled him to write to her to assure her of this provision, and to remit the first half-yearly payment of it. To Lord Borodale, who was returning to England, Count Waldemar entrusted the final settlement of this negotiation. But although bound, both by a promise and a written engagement,

and by every consideration of equity and honour, it afterwards appeared that this mean-spirited, perfidious wretch had not fulfilled the conditions, and after the first half year's annuity, had never remitted her another farthing. Her complaints were vain, her letters were unanswered, her remonstrances disregarded ; and in despair she had at last, accompanied by her aged father and her child, followed him to England. On arriving at London, they learnt he had gone down to the Lakes, and there they again followed him. From the inn at Hawkeshead, where they stopped, she sent a note to him and obtained an interview with him. But he overwhelmed her with reproaches, refused her all redress, and all he would consent to do for her was to give her money sufficient to return to France. In this exigence, finding that Count Waldemar was in the neighbourhood, she resolved to apply to him, which she did on the morning of Mr. Wentworth's ball. She went with her child only, for her old feeble father, exhausted by the fatigues of their long harassing journey, and by distress and disappointment, was too ill to accompany her. Count Waldemar indignantly heard the story of her aggravated wrongs, and could not refrain from inveighing against the baseness of the wretch who had perpetrated them, (which Mrs. Pry, Louisa Wentworth's maid, while listening at the door, in her ignorance of French, concluded from the tone to be reproaches directed to the poor girl.) He promised to obtain redress for her ;

and at his interview with Colonel Ormond the next morning, after he had demanded and obtained the promise of a public apology both to Miss De Cardonnell and himself for his conduct at the ball the preceding evening, Count Waldemar indignantly reproached him for his perfidious breach of faith towards Pauline, and demanded that, besides paying up the arrears due to her and the expenses of her journey from France and back again, he should for the future settle the annuity upon her and her child, so as to put it out of his own power to deprive them of any part of it.

It was upon this subject that the high words were heard to pass between them which excited so much alarm, and were imputed to their quarrel the preceding evening respecting Miss De Cardonnell. But in vain Colonel Ormond stormed. Count Waldemar was immovably firm ; and the dread of public exposure and of Pauline's cause being brought forward against him by her protector in a court of justice, compelled him to accede to the terms proposed. The money due was therefore paid, and the annuity secured to her by law for the joint lives of herself and child.

But as the dread of exposure alone compelled him to this reluctant deed of justice : he consented to it only upon condition that Pauline should enter into a solemn engagement to keep for ever secret the story of her wrongs, or at least the name of her betrayer, under pain of immediately forfeiting her annuity,

in case she ever revealed it. Colonel Ormond's anxiety to have the secret kept was so great, (for he foresaw, if known, it would utterly defeat his newly formed designs upon Miss De Cardonnell,) that he even privately exacted from Pauline—as she had told Mrs. De Cardonnell—a promise to deny that he was her betrayer, if the question was asked her. “I of course,” continued Lord Borodale, “when applied to, promised secrecy myself, and Count Waldemar had already given his word of honour not to divulge it.”

“And nobly has he kept his word!” exclaimed Mrs. De Cardonnell. “Though calumniated for the very actions which did him the highest honour; though his character was aspersed without any apparent possibility of his ever being able to clear it; he never, either by word or look, dropped a hint that could throw suspicion upon Colonel Ormond.”

“He never even told me,” said Lord Borodale, “of the suspicions you had formed of him: no doubt, from the well founded idea that I might be tempted to vindicate him, which I certainly could not have done without implicating Colonel Ormond.”

Colonel Ormond's Christian name Mrs. De Cardonnell found, on inquiry, was Henry.

“Still I don't understand what Pauline is doing here all this time,” said Lord Ardentower.

Lord Borodale said that the extreme debility of the old man had detained them. At the time the deeds relative to the annuity were executed, he was

confined to his bed, and he is even yet unable to set off on his return to France."

"Then that ride of Count Waldemar's through the rain the day after the ball, was doubtless to see Pauline and her father?" said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

"It was," said Lord Borodale. "He had acquainted me with the affair before I left the house that morning, and told me he had promised to go to Hawkeshead to acquaint Pauline and her father with the result of his negociation with Colonel Ormond, and also to place them in a more comfortable situation before he set off to Keswick."

Mrs. De Cardonnell's impatience to see Count Waldemar and make reparation for her injustice towards him was now excessive: and as soon as Lord Ardentower and his son were gone, she despatched a note to the Count, earnestly entreating him to call upon her, if possible, immediately: if not, the next morning. In the mean time, she felt that she owed some reparation to Pauline. So long as she considered her still to be living as the mistress of Count Waldemar, however much she had pitied and however little she had condemned her, she still felt that she could not with propriety take any notice of her. But now that she found that poor Pauline's character was as irreproachable as her misfortunes were interesting, Mrs. De Cardonnell went to visit her, anxious to atone for the injustice she had hitherto done her. On her entrance she beheld the father of Pauline, the

same old man whom Count Waldemar had once told Emily he had been to visit, but whose very existence she and Mrs. De Cardonnell had always considered a pure fiction. His lingering illness had protracted their stay: but he was now better, and able to creep out to the cottage door. Next week, therefore, he with Pauline and her child, were to set out on their return to France. The praises and blessings which they showered upon Count Waldemar's name were sufficient proof and confirmation of his generous, disinterested, and irreproachable conduct towards Pauline. She learnt that his calls had not been very frequent, always short, and that he had never seen Pauline except in her father's presence, since the day she had called upon him at Esthwaite Court.

Mrs. De Cardonnell had not returned from her visit many minutes before Count Waldemar rode up to the door. His surprise on receiving her urgent summons to call upon her was so great, that it prompted him to instant obedience. But great indeed was his amazement, and unbounded was his satisfaction, to find that the real facts of Pauline's story were fully known to her, and that his honour and character were unexpectedly vindicated, after he had utterly despaired of ever being at liberty to prove his innocence. Never had any event of his life given him half so much pleasure. To any noble mind the consciousness of unmerited obloquy is insupportable; but, to Count Waldemar, the conviction was almost

maddening, that he was regarded as a despicable villain by the very persons whose esteem and approbation he valued above those of the whole world; and that he was for ever forbidden to vindicate himself in their opinion by his own rash engagement. He loved Emily with all the intensity of passion. From the first moment he had beheld her, the interest caused by the unintentional danger into which he had thrown her by firing his gun, had been converted into admiration by the self-possession, the presence of mind, and the tranquil courage she had evinced:—courage, as remote from boldness as from weak and contemptible fear. The total absence of all affectation, the perfect sweetness of temper, the candour and the feeling she had shown even on that first day of their acquaintance, had excited his highest respect and approbation, and he had powerfully felt the charm of her natural captivating manners, of her talents, vivacity, grace, and beauty. Every day increased his respect and admiration by discovering the excellence of her principles, the extraordinary endowments of her mind, and the endearing and affectionate virtues of her heart. Imperceptibly, like the slender and almost invisible threads which the enchantress wound around Thalaba, whose magical power no human strength could break, the ties of love encircled his spell-bound heart. But he scarcely knew that he loved her, until, at the discovery of his supposed treachery towards Pauline, he also knew that she was

lost to him for ever. In every fresh trait of her character he felt more powerfully its charm : even the temporary extinction of her regard for him only served to raise her higher in his estimation, since it proved that she had withdrawn her esteem the moment she believed him unworthy of it, and that his admiration then became valueless in her eyes. Thus the very circumstance that seemed to render his attachment hopeless had increased its strength ; and those traces of mental suffering which Mrs. De Cardonnell and Emily imputed to remorse, were in reality caused by the anguish of an unsubdued passion, which like the vulture gnawing the vitals, seemed to prey upon the very sources of life and hope.

In the long and interesting explanation which ensued between Count Waldemar and Mrs. De Cardonnell, he said, that strange as it might appear, he had never thought of the possibility of suspicion attaching to him respecting Pauline, until the morning he had met Miss De Cardonnell as he was coming out of their cottage. Then it was only a passing thought ; but the memorandum in his pocket-book for something he was to do for Pauline, and the letter from her which afterwards fell into Emily's hands that very day, made him sensible of the misconstruction which might be put upon the subject. But when Mrs. De Cardonnell, at their next meeting, alluded to

it, when he found that Pauline's wrongs were known to her, and that he was their reputed author, "then, indeed," he said, "conviction of the truth flashed upon my mind: I saw the cruel situation in which my thoughtless imprudence had placed me; but it was too late. I had pledged my honour not to betray Colonel Ormond, and I could not clear myself without implicating him: I could not 'keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the sense.' O, had I foreseen the consequences of that rash promise!"

"Yes!" said Mrs. De Cardonnell, "Si jeunesse savoit, et si viellesse pouvoit!" or in more homely phrase, if 'we could set old heads on young shoulders,' then, and not till then, we should see perfect wisdom on earth. But why did you, after your first protestation of innocence, seem to acquiesce in the imputation of guilt?"

"Because I was too proud to assert my innocence when I had no means of proving it. It could only have exposed me to the imputation of falsehood: for the man who could be capable of perpetrating such base villainy would never hesitate to deny it: and how could I hope my bare assertion of innocence would be believed, when a chain of evidence so strong, and a combination of circumstances so convincing, which I was forbid to disprove or explain, brought home to me the indelible stigma of guilt?"

“ But had you spoken to Lord Borodale, he would have proved your innocence,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell.

“ Yes, and the guilt of Colonel Ormond, which we had both solemnly promised to conceal.”

“ That is true,” said Mrs. De Cardonnell, “ for if you had been cleared, we must have known that Colonel Ormond was the guilty person whom she had followed from France, because no one else in this part of the country has been abroad at all.” But she added, after a short pause, “ there was yet another resource : if you had told Colonel Ormond himself, that you were bearing the odium of his guilt, he must, in common justice and honour, have immediately cleared your character.”

“ He *did* know it,” said Count Waldemar, contemptuously, an expression of scorn slightly curling his fine upper lip as he spoke, “ for soon after you had accused me, he himself mentioned the subject to me, expressing great regret at Pauline’s detention in this neighbourhood and great fear that the story of her wrongs should become known, especially to you, lest it should interfere with his intention of gaining Miss De Cardonnell’s hand and he anxiously *hoped* I would keep it secret, which, after having given him my word and honour to do so, I resented as an insult. He made the most humble apologies, and I then told him, that *he* at least was safe from suspicion, for that you had seen Pauline, learnt some particulars of her

story from common report, and believed me to be her betrayer."

"And what did he say?" asked Mrs. De Cardonnell, indignantly.

"His countenance expressed his satisfaction, not only that he had escaped suspicion, but that I had incurred it. He begged me again and again not to betray him to you; and when, indignant at his distrust, I answered him with scorn and anger, he again asked my pardon in the most abject terms."

"Despicable villain!" exclaimed Mrs. De Cardonnell. "And is such a wretch permitted to disgrace society? But, at least, never more shall he enter these doors."

Their conversation lasted long; but finding that Emily was not expected until evening, Count Waldemar at last took his departure, having obtained permission to call the next morning, as he said, "to make his peace with Miss De Cardonnell."

CHAPTER XVIII.

RECONCILIATION AND MORTIFICATION.

“ I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass.”

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

— “ And must we part ?

Well,—if we must, we must ; and in that case

The less that 's said, the better.”

THE CRITIC.

EARLY, most unfashionably early, as was Count Waldemar's visit the following morning, Emily had been impatiently watching for his appearance, eager to repair the injustice she had done him. On her return the preceding evening, she had heard from her mother of his unexpected vindication with inexpressible joy, and with a degree of emotion which proved how deep was the interest he had inspired. The strong internal persuasion which she had lately entertained, contrary to appearances, reason, and apparent proof, that he was injured and innocent, founded upon the moral impossibility that a character such as his could have been

capable of such baseness, was now justified by the event; and both she and Mrs. De Cardonnell regretted that they had not placed more faith in this secret conviction.

On his entrance, Emily eagerly advanced to meet him, her sparkling eye, her rosy blush, and enchanting smile, proclaiming that the delightful emotion which filled his own breast extended to hers. Unhesitatingly she offered him her extended hand, saying in the sweetest tone, "Can you forgive us?"

He took that dear and lovely hand, which he had a thousand times longed to possess, and pressed it to his lips with deep respect and emotion, scarcely master of his transport or his feelings. For a few moments he retained it in his, while he repeated, "Forgive you! O, no! I have nothing to forgive."

She gently withdrew her hand, and he was reluctantly compelled to resign it, though not without an involuntary pressure, which brought a rosy suffusion over her face, while Mrs. De Cardonnell continued to speak.

Pleasure flashed from Count Waldemar's eye, when he gathered from Mrs. De Cardonnell's words, that in spite of the apparent incontrovertible evidence of his guilt, Emily had felt a strong internal conviction of his innocence. He said little, for he durst not trust himself with words, but his eyes expressed his feelings at this proof of her high esteem. With her native frankness and simplicity, Emily expressed the

admiration she felt for his generous self devotion in adhering to his promise, even at the sacrifice of his character. “*Now*,” he said emphatically, “*now* I am indeed rewarded.” The look and tone with which these words were uttered sufficiently proved that her approbation was his all-sufficient reward. It was a species of flattery the highest and the most delicate that he could have paid her. She felt its sincerity: she could not but be conscious that he valued her good opinion beyond that of every other person. Every word, every look, every action proved this. He too felt that not only was he restored to the place he formerly held in her estimation, but that he was raised in it; that her confidence in him, her regard for him, were increased; and that from the anxiety which every generous mind feels to repair unmerited injustice, both she and Mrs. De Cardonnell now displayed towards him a degree of interest and of marked attention and kindness which otherwise they would not have shewn.

Mrs. De Cardonnell asked him to dine both that day and the next, saying they were going that morning, by appointment, to meet the Wentworths and Lord Borodale and his sisters, at the lodgings of an artist then at Hawkeshead, who was to shew them his portfolio. The whole party were to return there to dine and stay the night, and the following day they were all going to visit Furness Abbey, where she hoped he would accompany them.

Count Waldemar gladly assented, and begged permission also to attend them to the landscape painter's, whose admirable drawings he had already seen and patronized.

The ride, to Count Waldemar, was delightful: he rode by Emily's side, and she once more smiled upon him and talked to him with confidence and kindness. To her, his attentions were devoted and unremitting, yet so natural and unobtrusive, that they attracted little notice from others, especially as he never for a moment forgot those attentions which politeness demanded from him to every one present. But how differently were the latter paid! In the most common attention to Emily, in every word, in every look, and at every moment, he evinced a degree of respect, of interest and devoted homage, which love only could have inspired. Yet probably no one was conscious of this, excepting she who received it and he who paid it. Even when his conversation was addressed to others, or when silent, she was conscious that his attention was fixed upon her; and when she met his eyes, they spoke a language which her heart felt and understood. And what female heart could have resisted the ardent attachment of such a man?

The whole party, on their return from the landscape painter's, met Colonel Ormond, in his travelling carriage, flying from the country, and they enjoyed the shame, rage, and confusion, which obviously overwhelmed him at the encounter. It had occurred both

to Lord Ardentower and to Mrs. De Cardonnell, that Colonel Ormond, on finding that his guilt with respect to Pauline was known, would accuse Count Waldemar of having betrayed him. His Lordship, therefore, and Mrs. De Cardonnell, had that morning separately dispatched a letter to Colonel Ormond, acquainting him with the manner in which the truth had become known, and exonerating Count Waldemar from all knowledge of, or participation in, its disclosure. Mrs. De Cardonnell, in conclusion, declined for the future receiving Colonel Ormond's visits at Coniston Hall, and Lord Ardentower, in the most pithy and cutting terms, stated that, after his unparalleled baseness in allowing Count Waldemar to bear the odium of his guilt, he must for himself and every member of his family, decline all further intercourse with a person capable of such dishonourable and ungentlemanlike conduct.

But before receiving these letters, or being aware that he was "blown," as he elegantly expressed it, with respect to Pauline, Colonel Ormond had determined to quit the country, in consequence of the pitiful figure he felt he should cut after Miss De Cardonnell's rejection, and his exposure as a fortune-hunter.

When therefore he made his appearance that morning, at his usual late hour, at Rusland Hall, he announced the necessity of his immediate departure, saying that he had received letters of importance

which required his presence in London without delay.

Mr. Trevelyan heard the news with that apathy which he felt about every thing that did not immediately concern himself. Lady Rusland, with the rigid formality of the old school, pressed his further stay, and expressed exactly the proper quantity of sorrow for his loss ; looking all the while exactly like a wall. Sir Reginald Rusland wondered, and never ceased to wonder, how Colonel Ormond could have received those important letters a full hour before the post came in, and when, to his certain knowledge, no express had arrived.

“ By the way, Ormond,” said Trevelyan, with sudden recollection, stretching himself out in the great arm-chair in which he was lounging by the fire-side, “ I suppose, though, you are only going up to town to prepare for your marriage ? ”

“ Marriage ? ” said Lady Rusland.

“ Yes ; didn’t you know it ? He’s going to be married to Miss De Cardonnell : he told me of it two or three days ago.”

“ Indeed ! I wish you joy, Colonel Ormond, on this happy event. Pray when is the wedding to take place ? ”

“ Never ! ” exclaimed Colonel Ormond, in whose countenance rage, mortification, and confusion, had been struggling for supremacy during this dialogue, “ Never, madam ! ”

“Never!” exclaimed Trevelyan; “then *I* wish you joy, Ormond; hang me if I don’t. I wish you joy of *not* going to be married.” And long and loud Trevelyan laughed at his own wit.

Sir Reginald, who had wondered to hear that Colonel Ormond was going to be married, and then wondered that he was not going to be married, finally began to wonder afresh at his sudden departure. But before his wonder had subsided, a letter was brought into the room for Colonel Ormond.—“Lord Ardentower’s servant waits to know if there is any answer, sir,” said the footman.

“Mrs. De Cardonnell’s servant waits to know if there is any answer, sir,” said another footman, entering with another letter.

“By Jove, Ormond! these must be the ‘important letters’ that you were talking about, I think. Why, man, how your hand shakes! and how white—and how red you look!” said Trevelyan. “What the devil is the matter?”

“I hope that Lord Ardentower and that Mrs. De Cardonnell are quite well?” inquired Lady Rusland, in the most formal tone.

“I wish they were at the devil!” muttered Colonel Ormond between his teeth.

“Shall I bid the servants wait?” asked the footman. “Any answer shall I say to his Lordship and Mrs. De Cardonnell?”

“Confound them both!” exclaimed the enraged

Colonel Ormond, throwing the letters furiously behind the fire, and stalking hastily out of the room, while the astonished footmen, after staring at each other, walked out after him.

“By Jove! how Ormond bangs to the door!” exclaimed Trevelyan, laughing. “What a confounded rage he is in! What can be in these letters, I wonder?” And Trevelyan, as he spoke, snatched them out from the back of the grate, where they were lying scorched but unconsumed; and he began to read their contents aloud, while his uncle and aunt, though they blamed him for taking the letters, listened to them. Their purport has been already mentioned.

Trevelyan had just made an end of the second billet when Colonel Ormond re-entered the room; but without noticing his wrath at the perusal of them, Trevelyan exclaimed, “Hang it, Ormond! this is too bad! How could you throw the blame of that business about the French girl at Coniston upon Waldemar, as you did to me, when it was yourself all the time? Confound it!—it’s too bad for any thing!”

Sir Reginald Rusland, whose sense of honour was high and his morals punctiliously strict, was inexpressibly shocked at hearing of conduct the baseness of which surpassed his conception.

Lady Rusland, whose notions of decorum were perhaps more rigid than her sense of honour, was so scandalized to hear that Colonel Ormond had a French mistress, who had followed him even to *her*

house—to Rusland Hall, that mansion of propriety,—that she seemed, in her horror at that abomination, wholly to overlook the diabolical plot of deceit and treachery by which poor Pauline's ruin had been accomplished,—the baseness of his deserting of her and her child, without even affording them the means of decent maintenance, and finally his dishonourable meanness in throwing the odium of his own infamous conduct upon Count Waldemar.

A dead silence reigned. Colonel Ormond in vain attempted to stammer out some incoherent attempt at invective against his accusers, and defence of himself.

No answer came.—Trevelyan whistled. And detected, exposed, insulted, contemned, covered with ignominy, confusion, and shame, Colonel Ormond took his departure for ever from Westmoreland.

His mortification was complete by encountering on the road, as we have already mentioned, the Wentworths, Dormers, Count Waldemar, Mrs. and Miss De Cardonnell, Lord Borodale, and the Ladies St. Leger; none of whom took any other notice of him than by a look of ineffable contempt.

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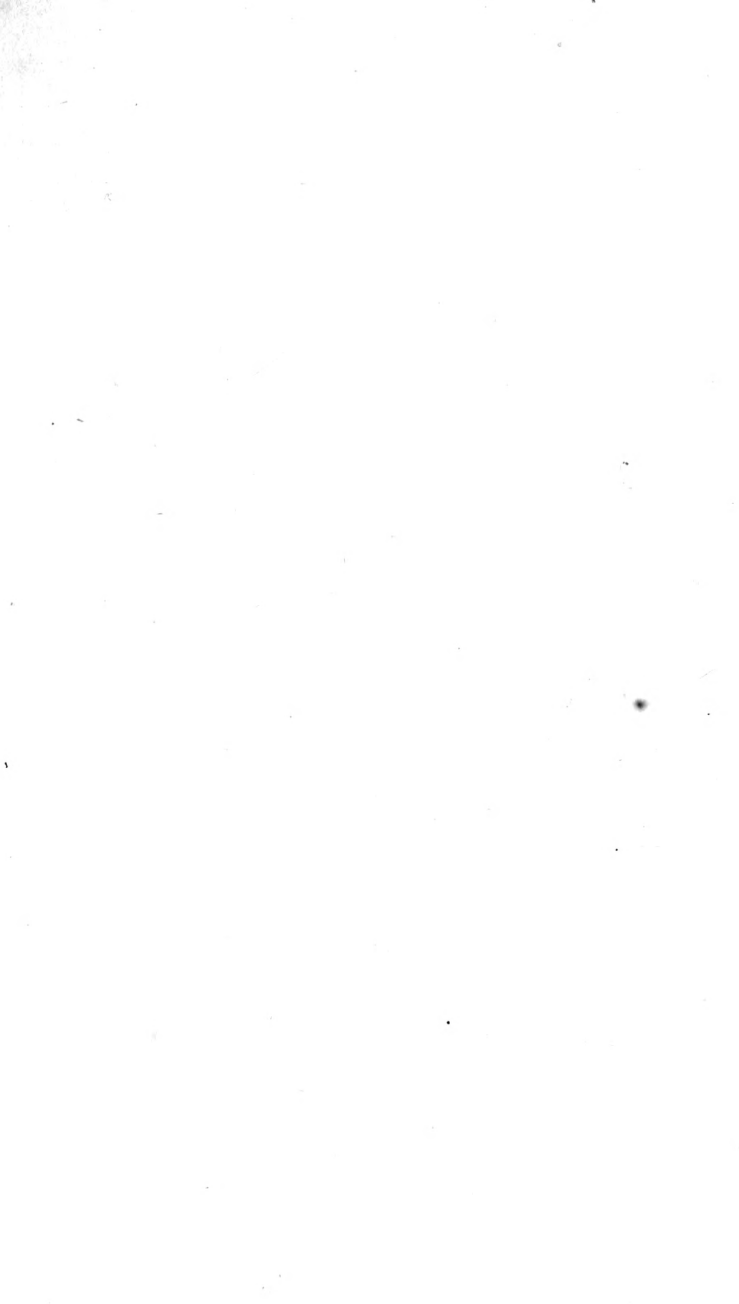
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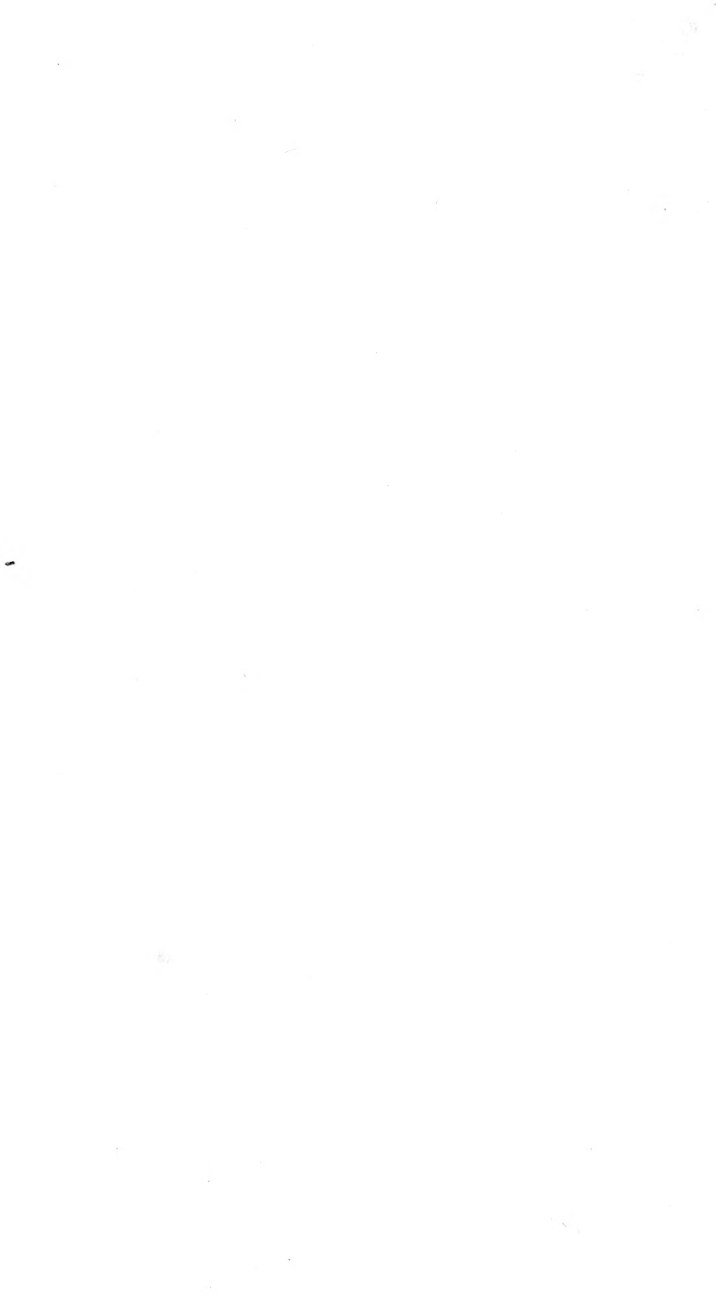
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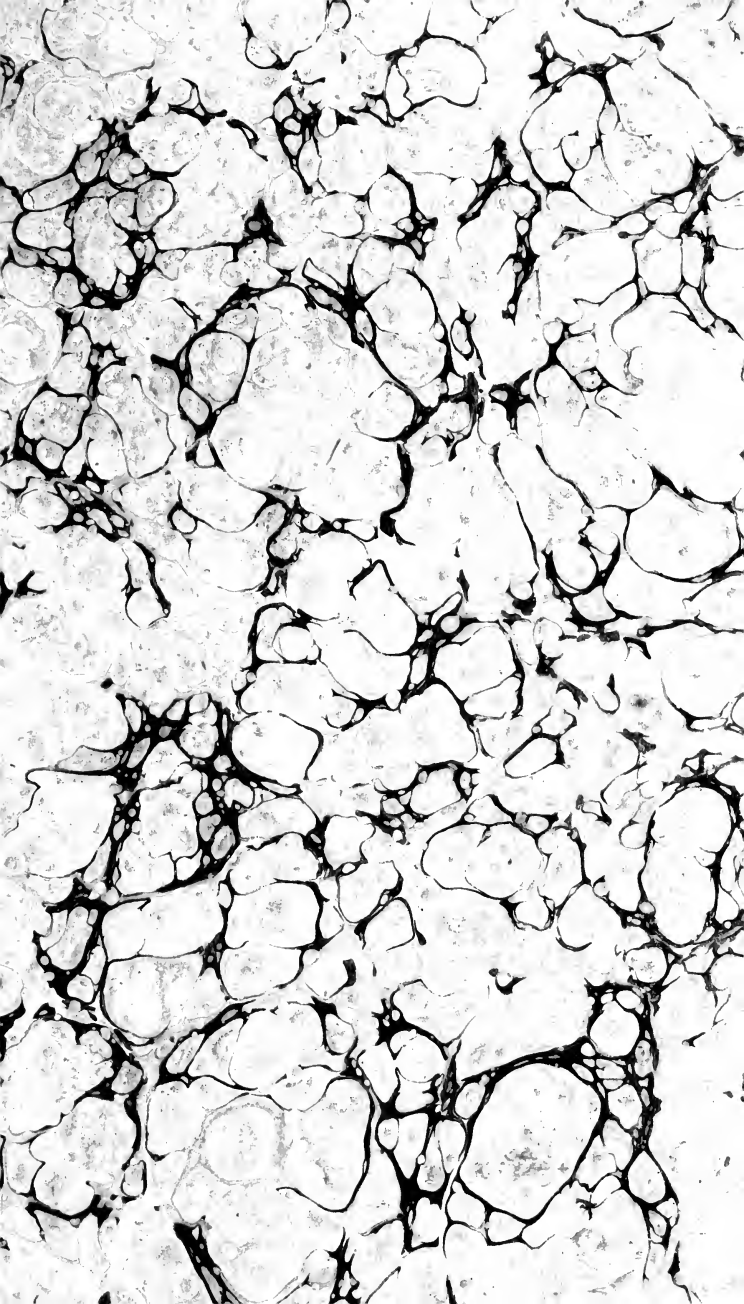
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